

WIRE

THE WIRE ADVENTURES IN MODERN MUSIC
WWW.THEWIRE.CO.UK ISSUE 232 JUNE 2003 £3.50



**The Ex
David Sylvian
Mauricio Kagel
Soft Machine
Yo La Tengo**



Nina Simone Asmus Tietchens Sightings Cliff Martinez Semiconductor

Inside



Yo La Tengo photographed in New York by Chris Buck

Regulars

Editor's Idea 4

Letters 6

**Bitstream/
Death Row** 10

Notes from the underground/
Holger Czukay's last requests

Global Ear 18

In Jerusalem, Eran Sachs observes Israel's
avant music community struggling for identity

Charts 56

Out There 98

Event listings: what's happening in the world

Directory 104

Plus Label Love and Savage Pencil

Subscribe 106

Back Issues 108

Epiphanies 114

Brian Morton finds solace in the music of Tim
and Jeff Buckley

Reviews

Index 57

Soundcheck 58

The month's record reviews

Print Run 82

New music books digested

The Inner Sleeve 85

Album art selected by Kim Horthay

Cross Platform 86

Semiconductor's digital dystopias, plus
multimedia reviews

On Location 98

Live reviews including *All Tomorrow's Parties*
and *Freedom Of The City*

Nina Simone 26

The late singer led a tragic life, always searching for the key to freedoms she was constantly denied. By Ian Penman

The Ex 30

In Amsterdam, Dan Warburton squats in the fish tank with the veteran anarchist-punk agitators

Yo La Tengo 36

In New York, David Keenan sups with the 20 year old avant rock trio who got hip to free jazz

Mauricio Kagel 42

The deconstructed works of this Argentinian composer prefigured postmodernism by some decades. By Philip Clark

Invisible Jukebox 20 David Sylvian

The sonic alchemist and enlightened crooner takes this month's blindfold test. By Christoph Cox

Bites

Sightings 12

Cliff Martinez 14

Asmus Tietchens 16

Editor's Idea

Way back in June 1995, I found myself dispatched with a suitcase full of magazines to Barcelona, with instructions to flag them at the festival called Sonar. With no idea what to expect ('festival' having previously denoted a campsite somewhere in the Quaintocks), the approach to the event's entrance gate at the Centre of Contemporary Culture was as thrilling then as it remains today, ten years later. As your body adjusts to the midday Catalan heat, you push through the crowds on Las Ramblas, heading past a fine old Art Nouveau farmacia, and by the time you pass the entrance to the mysterious sounding street, Carrer del Doctor Dau, you are beginning to feel the thud of powerful tube sound systems under your soles and in your soul. In '95, the area immediately outside the CCCB entrance was populated only by a few local kids kicking a football and lobbing firecrackers. Nowadays you'll find yourself bounded by the legions of satellite traders that go hand in hand with any large outdoor event: hat traders, beer and water stalls, ice-filled功德品, tobacco and narcotic services, etc.

This month, Sonar hosts its tenth festival, an event which promises to be the biggest yet. Its growth is a remarkable story, aided in no small measure by the support of the local council, who have seen it as a

complement to the regeneration of Barcelona's inner city. Back in '95, the day events seemed pretty quiet; most of the outdoor courtyard, which nowadays is rammed with thousands of people, was at that time screened off with a discreet line of small canopies. You never had to queue either to imbibe or discharge fluids, and there was hardly an advertising logo in sight. You could peep over the shoulder at what some of the continent's most artful and creative DJs were spinning on the potter's wheel, and watch from close up performances of alchemical intensity from the likes of Jorge Reyes, Biosphere, Sorn and Kenny Larkin.

It was a remarkable experience in other ways: meeting so many festivaleiros, label owners and musicians revolved, in a way that wasn't clear from sitting behind a desk, the accumulation of a network of musical interconnection and unity of purpose that was extending far and wide across the European mainland and beyond, enlightened and trans-generational. This was a Europe that was unbelievably far from the vision of Mittleurope so often (and still, lamentably) propagated by the popular UK press, one that apes English and American pop forms in silly accents. On the contrary, this generation was self-confident, attuned to technology, communications and distribution

systems and finding a common language in electronic's liberating channels of non-verbal energy.

It was inspirational, and continues to be after ten years in which the enterprise has mushroomed on a mammoth scale. There are those who complain about the size and the branding, and it's true that there remain contentious issues around, for example, the lack of remuneration for smaller artists who add underground credibility to the event, unlike the more bankable names.

But Sonar's absurdly small team, like the dedicated people who put together the ATP festivals, are not opportunists, but utopians focusing an alternative global network in unusual spaces. Nevertheless they are produced in a real world of contingency. In that light, marshalling hundreds of musicians, each with their own demands and peculiarities, coping with the security and pleasure zones of almost 100,000 visitors, they have created an experience unlike any other, one that still feels like it's about connecting people and ideas rather than trying to sell you stuff. These events contain plenty that intersects with The Wire's orbit, so we'll be turning out in force in Barcelona and Los Angeles once more this month.

ROB YOUNG

WIRE

WWW.THEWIRE.CO.UK

2nd Floor East
88-94 Wentworth Street
London E1 7SA, UK
Tel +44 (0)20 7422 5010
Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011
info@thewire.co.uk
www.thewire.co.uk

The above address is used for the info@Wire.co.uk
Please see below for other addresses and telephone numbers.

US The Wire (ISSN 0952-0686) is published 10 times a year by the Wire Magazine Ltd.
ISSN 0952-0686. Postage paid at rate of 10c per issue. New Jersey Postmaster:
Please send address changes to: The Wire Magazine, c/o Telex 127-127, Metuchen, NJ 08840. All subsequent
mailing labels are postage paid at the Post Office, Metuchen, NJ 08840. Postage paid at the Post Office, Metuchen, NJ 08840.
Changes of address: Please allow four weeks for change of address to take effect.

The above address is used for the info@Wire.co.uk
Please see below for other addresses and telephone numbers.

The rates represented in the US are those of the respective institutions and are not necessarily shared by the magazine or its staff. The Wire is not responsible for undelivered manuscripts, correspondence,
or illustrations. Unsolicited manuscripts, correspondence, or illustrations are not returned. No responsibility is assumed for damage to manuscripts, illustrations, or correspondence sent to the magazine.

Unpublished manuscripts of any kind are handled with care.

Adventures In Modern Music

Issue 232 June 2003
£3.30
ISSN 0952-0686 (USPS 006231)

Editor-in-Chief & Publisher Tony Hennigton
tony@thewire.co.uk

Editor Rob Young editor@thewire.co.uk

Reviews Editor Chris Brown reviews@thewire.co.uk

Assistant Editor Anna Held Neale anna@thewire.co.uk

Assistant & Editor & Staff Writer Peter Shapiro

Art Direction & Design Kell Ekhon, Jon Paris
info@theformers.com

Advertising Sales (0742 5024)

Andy Tait andy@thewire.co.uk

Shawn Woolmen shawn@thewire.co.uk

Advertising Production

Simon Smith design@thewire.co.uk

Subscriptions & Administration (0742 5022)

Ben House, Phil England sub@thewire.co.uk

Web Editor Lisa Caveriou-Russell lms@thewire.co.uk

Interns Mia Douglas

Distributors

News stands

UK, EUROPE & REST OF WORLD
TELEPHONE

DOMESTIC: Spectrum Books

Teleshop Works, Twickenham Road

London TW1 3PA, UK
Tel +44 181 880 4028

Fax +44 181 880 4330

email: spectrum@twinkie.co.uk

mailto:spectrum@twinkie.co.uk

USA

Eastern Head:

West State Books, New York, NY 10019

For US newsstand queries call

800 221 6348

Fax for US subscription queries contact

The Wire (see opposite)

Independent record shops

EU & MIDDLE EAST

TELEPHONE

Stevenside Records

23A Colindene Road

London NW8 4LL

UK +44 181 200 0119

Fax +44 181 880 8148

email: stevenside@uk2.ah

www.stevenside.co.uk

USA

Eastern Head:

Record Express

228 Lowell Street

Beverly MA 01914

For FOB USA 9776

email: record@record.com

www.record.com

Worldwide
Central The Hague Direct
88 Wijtsstraat
Londen 2717
Tel +31 70 329 4854
Fax +31 70 329 4854
email: central@centralrecords.com

Images Amy & Turner, Frank Baker, Karenom Black, Chris Buck, Michael Ek, City Hewitt, Simon Legg, Sebastian Meyer, Savage Pencil, Eva Vermandel, Johnin Volcano, Jake Walters, Keiko Yoshida

Subscriptions (see page 106)

THE WIRE

88-94 Wentworth Street

London E1 7SA, UK

Holiday Inn 0800 365 9200

Rest of World 0181 200 0000

Europe 0181 200 0000

America 0181 200 0000

Japan 0181 200 0000

Rest of World 0181 200 0000

4 THE WIRE

At The Wire can also supply record shops
in Europe and the US direct

SP03645



FOUR TET

NEW ALBUM - CD & DBL LP - OUT NOW

ROUNDS

Letters

Write to: Letters, *The Wire*, 2nd Floor East, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA, UK

Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011, email letters@thewire.co.uk

Letters should include a full name and address



Bug-eyed in Bedsville: The Cramps



Record collector

A quick comment on your Cramps Invisible Jukebox (*The Wire* 231). Good to see you covering the important groups from my era who have stuck to their guns, like The Cramps, The Fall, Wire, etc. However, surely they must have released more than six LPs? No mention of Songs *The Lord Taught Us* – a glaring omission for such a seminal record (actually it was referred to during the interview – Ed). Then there was Psychedelic Jungle, *Off The Bone* (a compilation reply), *Smell Of Female* (only a mini-LP), *A Date With Ewks*, the phenomenal Rockin'ineenockland-newzealand (on Vengeance and a semi-bootleg), *Stay Sick!*, *Look Mum No Head*, the surprisingly excellent *Plasmoid*, the very disappointing Big Beat from Bedsville and now *Rends...*. That makes eight studio albums plus the mini-LPs, compilations, live issues, etc. Come on, give them some credit for not being as slothful as a mutant zombie.

Andy Duncan Brecon, UK

The statement *In question*, that *The Cramps* had only released six albums, was made due to a subbing error. Apologies to the writer, Richard Henderson – Ed

Sine writer

Let me thank you for Dan Warburton's beautiful review of Asmus Tietchens' (Soundcheck, *The Wire* 231) It's about time The Wire dealt with the work of this German composer, who has developed an uncompromising musical language that is totally his own. One small note: the conclusion only refers to the sinewave/white noise manipulations as released on Rötsomel. Tietchens has expanded the studies and a fourth disc (entitled *Data-Mongo*) is due some time on the Swiss Label Dornbirl. Secondly, let me state that Auf Abwegen maintains the official Asmus Tietchens Web page, which can be found at www.tietchens.de. Till Kniola Cologne, Germany

See the interview with Tietchens on page 12 of this month's issue – Ed

The Irish question

For the record, the Belfast Songs book and CD project (*Print Run*, *The Wire* 231) was not part of the city's failed "city of culture" bid. Being funded by the Arts

Council of Northern Ireland or the Belfast City Council does not mean you are "trading on the symbolic capital of Belfast", as even a cursory glance at some of the city's funded artistic output would demonstrate. Ben Watson might have done well to read Belfast Songs a little more carefully. It is not true that "all the writing pitches genuine experience of the city versus 'media cliché'". The contributors were not producing "art manifestos". Chris Magie did not fail "to expose the liberal left liver" of Crass (*Magee*: "They were mocked as middle class rebels playing at being revolutionaries"). The word "Bellboy" was not cut from 20 songs. That is not CD flutter, it is a banjo. No promo flyers were necked at the launch, etc, etc.

But so much for accuracy. Ben Watson is obviously confused by the project of writing about Belfast. The authors are not "determinedly anti-sectarian", they find not being sectarian very easy. None of the contributors are guilty of "dodgy" ("you don't live here so you don't know" solipsism) (not least because they don't all live here, and in some cases never have). Mr Watson must demonstrate his learning: "the promise of post-structuralism... founders on the distinctly unsymbolic nature of the Troubles", The Troubles unsymbolic? See Orange parades, bonfires, funerals, hunger strikes, murals, etc. Watson claims that neglect of the key fact that "Ireland was Britain's first colony" (what?) and the lack of "analysis of imperialist history" leads contributors to "the argument used by whites to defend apartheid South Africa".

Insecure and astid, is that enough? No, sadly not: try patronising. Paul Muldoon "is neary, but not quite, convincing" and finally "one dreams that Belfast Songs could provoke a scrofulous, cassette and photocopy pastiche put together by carry locals". Oh yes, the carry local – what would he be in the pub with a flat cap and a 'quare' expression, I expect.

Hilarious, but perhaps not suitable for a serious magazine.

Richard West, Stephen Hackett (Factotum) Belfast, UK

Your mis-readings of my text are so legion / can only refer readers back to my original review, and chuckle (or is that not allowed in "serious" magazines?) – BW

Old Bailey

Keith Coyne's provocative letter (*Letters, The Wire* 231) will no doubt prompt a flood of replies. For what

it's worth, here's my contribution. I'd say Derek Bailey has certainly driven up a commercial cult de sac, but an artistic one? Bailey, now well into his seventies we shouldn't forget, has over the last 20 odd years been busily testing his "fossilised", "desiccated" and "stale" art in a diverse array of musical settings. Some have worked, some haven't. But in any case these do not seem to me to be the actions of a complacent artist.

And The Wire "increasingly doctrinaire"? It continues to help keep my mind open, but then again I read it in the context of a range of different media and make my own mind up. I don't think you have to take everything that appears in the magazine as sacrosanct, and I'm sure the staff would be disappointed if you did.

Steve Walsh via email

Thanks for printing Keith Coyne's letter re: Derek Bailey. Most refreshing to hear the sacred Egoes of Improv knocked off his and pedestal (Ben Watson probably wed-d in his SWP shell-suit bottoms), and I look forward to further letters from Keith about AMM, Evan Parker and the rest.

Thanks also for the article on Matthew Herbert which was good for a few laughs. If he's really an earnest Chomsky-ite and not a bandwagon-jumping alt.chancer, then I'm Richard Branson, the well known anti-capitalist, Prog/hippy.

Simon Fey via email

A not-so special relationship

John Tilbury (*Letters, The Wire* 231) states that he has "no one to blame but [himself]" for the way that the piece about him in *The Wire* 230 turned out. However, the real question for Tilbury is not whether he should have made his wishes clearer over the content of the piece, but why he thinks that an article concentrating on his silence in relation to the USA would have been appropriate in the first place. One of the reasons why I enjoy reading *The Wire* is that it focuses on music as sound, an approach that acknowledges social context but refuses extramusical agendas. A piece centring on Tilbury's decision not to go to the USA, at the expense of discussing his recent musical activity, would have been inappropriate and, worst of all, boring.

Richard Rees Jones Brighton, UK



CHATHAM

AN ANGEL MOVES TOO FAST TO SEE SELECTED WORKS 1971-1989

At first glance, New York-born composer Rhys Chatham might have seemed unlikely to alter the DNA of rock. A classically trained musician, Chatham was piano tuner to Glenn Gould and La Monte Young, student of Young and Morton Subotnick, protégé of Tony Conrad, and in 1971, while still in his teens, founder of the highly influential experimental music program at the Kitchen in lower Manhattan. Nevertheless, it was Rhys Chatham who first applied multiple electric guitars to the extended-duration, overexposure-drenched minimalism of the 1960s. This amalgamation — of the intellectual experimentalism and textural sophistication of the avant-garde with the rhythmic brashness and visceral punch of punk rock — produced a raucous, ecstatic new type of urban music that energized the downtown New York scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s, a music whose influence can be heard in the subsequent work of many luminaries who participated in Chatham's ensembles, including Glenn Branca and members of Sonic Youth, Mars, Band of Susans and Swans.

A comprehensive 3-disc retrospective, *An Angel Moves Too Fast to See* includes all of Chatham's major "minimal" pieces, ranging from the thunderous "Two Gongs" (1971) and the No-Wave tumult of "Guitar Trio" (1977) to the brass-based "Massacre on MacDougal Street" (1982) and the epic, previously unreleased "An Angel Moves Too Fast to See" (1985), scored for an orchestra of 100 electric guitars. The accompanying 140-page book features dozens of never-before-published photos plus essays by Chatham, Tony Conrad and Lee Ranaldo and artwork by famed visual artist Robert Longo. Together they present a portrait of a city and a milieu where, for a moment, the raw, the sophisticated, the meditative and the danceable merged.

LAVISH 3xCD BOX SET FEATURING 140-PAGE BOOK AND 96-PAGE CATALOG; LINER NOTES BY TONY CONRAD, SONIC YOUTH'S LEE RANALDO AND RHY'S CHATHAM; ARTWORK BY ROBERT LONGO; INCLUDES UNRELEASED RECORDINGS OF CHATHAM'S ORCHESTRA FOR 100 GUITARS.



SAN AGUSTIN THE EXPANDING SEA

Georgia natives San Agustin (David Daniel, guitar; Andrew Barnes, guitar; Bryan Fielden, drums) have performed with a multitude of notables from the improvised community, including Ken Vandermark, Thurston Moore, Loren MazzaCane and others, but this 3xCD boxed set is the first truly representative document of their live presence. Haunting moments of introspection are enveloped in clouds of bluesy guitar notes, then swept away by great electric gales, drones rumble and shimmer in the aftermath. *The Expanding Sea* is a tremendous work by an ensemble that is creating a genre-defying yet archetypically American music.

"San Agustin works in suspended slow-motion patterns that revolve around simple resonating phrases, like a rock trio stripped of all content — just leaving a bare skeleton of tone traces behind. The beauty is in its strict restraint; unlike many improvising trios, the group never heads off into chaos, with every piece a tamed and trimmed exercise in controlled feedback and subtle cymbal chimes. Bridging post-rock and avant-garde on one axis, and on the other retaining a strict adherence to rock tradition, the feel is of a familiar austerity that calls to mind the chilling moments of Sonic Youth's first album."

—ALL MUSIC GUIDE

"Trio from Georgia that purvey a floating ethereal improvised gauzy veil of sound. Jazzy drumming (in the best sense) and criss-crossing picked guitar parts by turns meditative and discursive, these guys have a great take on group dynamics and are justly lauded... Enthrancing."

—CORPUS HERMERICUM

"There's an intelligence at work here, and something intuitive. You can't pinpoint it, maybe in the way you can't explain the smell of a rose."

—Loren MazzaCane Connors

3xCD BOXED SET IN DELUXE, LIMITED-EDITION GOLD FOIL PACKAGING WITH 24-PAGE BOOK AND 96-PAGE CATALOG; LINER NOTES BY DANIEL CARTER.



Letters

Design for living

I really enjoyed the Cross Platform interview with Intro's Adrien Shaughnessy (*The Wire* 233). I realise now why I love digiback design over bog standard plastic cases. It's the going back to being 14/15 and poring over vinyl sleeves and wondering what the album will sound like. The fantastic mystery of the whole thing coupled with rushing back to your bedroom to listen and dissect sleeve notes and design. As Shaughnessy points out, anyone who has a PC is a graphic designer now. In the same way, anyone who owns a PC is also a musician. As a graphic designer in the real world and bedroom musician in the other world (whatever that is), I find the process identical: you take a snapshot of music/photography stretch it, reverse it or warp it into something new.

A lot of Intro's work looks to have this "hand touched" feel in the rather cold, digital, perfect world we live in. It's very easy to go down a path that is "here's the picture, slap on some text and away we go". Long live smudges, mistakes, scratches and human feel. I like Intro's work a lot,

Jon Black via email

Beauty stab

The Wire 231: first time this reader of eight years has had to close the magazine while reading it on public transportation due to the overwhelming beauty of the graphic design work. Actually stunned my mind upon reaching the double page spread that opened the Meg article! Informal journalism, music, art, culture and now design on a par with your finest content in these fields... *EikonFonse*... it does have a lovely ring to it...

Jefferson W Petrey Seattle, USA

Cora truth

I'm compelled to write concerning a statement in David Krasnow's Tom Cora retrospective (*The Wire* 230). The author states that Tom and I started working together when I was "fresh out of music school". Don't know where Krasnow got that idea, but I never attended music school. I took a handful of lessons with Millard Graves, a couple with Andrew Cyrille and Barry Altschul, and did an extended stay in Nigeria learning some drumming and lots else from the great Idemudia Izuezeh and his traditional drumming group, but music school? Nope!

Otherwise, I feel that the wrong impression might have been imparted by Krasnow's statement: "[Tom] played a few shows with Sam Bennett." In fact Third Person, over the course of five years or so, probably clocked close to 80 live performances in tours of Europe, Japan and the US, and at home in New York City, many of those featuring saxophonist Umzeaz Kazeotoki, who settled in as the permanent "third person" during the last couple of years of the group's existence.

One other point: it might well have been an editorial decision rather than the author's intention, but it seems to me that offering your readership only one and two-thirds pages of text on the life's work of Tom Cora was a bit stingy, especially when one considers that this was the first feature on Tom to appear in the pages of *The Wire*, and will almost certainly be the last.

Sam Bennett Tokyo, Japan

Put the funk back in it

In his review of Fred Wesley's autobiography (*Print Run*, *The Wire* 230), Ben Watson hits the nail on the head. As a Ruberfan and funkster myself, I can only confirm that Wesley's horn arrangements on the George Clinton-produced sides from the mid-70s onwards are a good part of the funk's inherent to those records. Working an improbable yet tembly efficient alchemy with other members of these groups, Wesley brought some welcome tightness to an otherwise lunatic whole. Similarly, any James Brown track involving "Freddy Fred" is an awe-inspiring experience in group sound. I therefore find it hard on Wesley's part to dash the Godfather and Motownship so much. All the records he put out under his own name since the late 80s have been lame, "to say the least, apart from the odd good track here and there."

Undoubtedly, Fred Wesley is one of my heroes, his contribution to the funk genre is vital, but he lacks the sheer madness of JB or the adventurous genius of Dr Funkenstein. To my ears, his jazz playing has not much to recommend it. Wesley should stick to the funk.

My gentle wrath extends to other Old School funksters. While Muze Parker and Bootsy have taken a more commercial route with a certain degree of success, George Clinton has not made a decent record in quite some time now. The latest three JB albums are no less than embarrassing, with no real horns or drums. JB recently said that he missed the time of his great horn players. When I last saw him on the scene in Toulouse six months ago, he ordered one of the saxophone players, "Blow like Maceo!" A telling fact if there ever was one. S'cuse me for that lengthy bout of funk nostalgia. Glad to see you ain't forgetting the funk, though. Good God!

David Cristof Toulouse, France

Vestigial organ

In your cover story on Faust (*The Wire* 229), David Keenan wrote, "The Velvets connection became much more explicit after Nettelbeck lashed on the idea of setting up a collaboration between New York minimalist La Monte Young/early Velvets associate Tony Conrad and the Faust rhythm section of Diermaier and Pörr, augmented by Soana and a still uncredited Immerl on organ. The record was eventually released as *Outside The Dream Syndicate*." I owe it to the late Rudolf Soana to point out to you myself that the credits on *Outside The Dream Syndicate* are correct

and complete. All organ parts on *Outside* are played solely by Rudolf Soana.

Uwe Nettelbeck Morensen, France

Only connect

Thanks very much for the illuminating profile/obit of Daphne Gram (*The Wire* 229). It was great to read about another female originator of electronic/electroacoustic music. Something about the name rang a vague bell, but it wasn't till the other day I realised why: it's a New Zealand connection. The "father" of electronic music in NZ was the late Douglas Librum. He established the first Southern Hemisphere EMS at Victoria University in Wellington in 1966. Daphne was crucial to this.

In 1963 Librum was on a study tour, and arrived in the UK after a period in Toronto, where he had realised how little he really knew about what he wanted to do. He found few people in London or the major universities in the UK able or willing to help him, until he encountered Daphne and was invited to spend some time in her outhouse. It was after this period of hands-on work and discussion that he felt personally equipped to make a return west to Wellington with Myron Schaeffer, who then taught him enough to enable the establishment of the VUWEMS in Wellington.

Most of this information is contained in the booklet accompanying the 1974 KWPacific Records box set *New Zealand Electronic Music*, but the identity of Daphne Gram was a mystery until I read your article. So thanks to *The Wire* for illuminating this crucial episode in New Zealand musical history, and thanks to Daphne for having the unselfishness to give a hand to an enquiring Antipodean. We all have reason to be grateful.

Bruce Russell Lyttleton, New Zealand

Connections

Issue 231 In the Mego feature, the photo of the Mego crew in 1965 did not feature Andreas Profer, but Bernhard, their former landlord. The photo of Sarah Peebles and Nalan Perera on page 14 was taken by Daniel Peebles. In Soundcheck, the photo of Nurse With Wound was taken by Andra Tibet, and Asmus Tietchens's Gamma-Megie was mistakenly called Beta-Megie. In Cross Platform, the review of La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela's *Well-Tuned Piano* in *The Magenta Lights* DVD stated that the material was a reissue of the Gramavision box set recorded on 25 October 1981 and released in 1987. In fact, it documents a totally different performance recorded on 10 May 1987. In the Directory, the details for the Hwyl label were incorrect. The correct URL is www.hwyldistro.com.

Issue 230 In Soundcheck some of the song titles in the review of Wire's *Saints* were written out incorrectly. The correct titles are: "Mr Marx's Table" and "You Can't Leave Now". □

Coming next month: *The Wire* 233. On sale from 19 June

www.thewire.co.uk

The Wire's official Web presence, featuring out of print articles, news, links, database, mailing list and more

The Wire discussion group

Unofficial online forum devoted to the kind of music and culture covered in *The Wire*. groups.yahoo.com/group/thewire

The Wire on Resonance 104.4 FM

A weekly show of new music hosted by *The Wire* staff. Broadcasting across London on 104.4 FM every Thursday, 9.30-11pm GMT, and streamed live at www.resonancefm.com

MATT ELLIOTT

The Mess We Made

The new album from the man behind The Third Eye Foundation

"A small avalanche of recorded evidence that music is as fresh as ever"

The Independent

"For those times when rain hurls itself at your windows, and the wind whispers 'neath your doors" www.dosomethingpretty.com

"Ghostly, aquatic ambience that doubles as a timely lament for these lost, crazy times" 4/5 Times Play

"A beguiling mix of krautrockin' electronica, Tom Waits-style bluesy and yonic, distorted folk and choral pieces" 4/5 Bang

"A prime, phrenic, free-falling vision of chaos" 4/5 DJ

ON TOUR or help take the pain away:
Wed 21 May BRIGHTON Sanctuary
Thu 22 May CAMBRIDGE Portland Arms
Sat 24 May GLASGOW Stereo
Sun 25 May LIVERPOOL The Barfly
Mon 26 May MANCHESTER Tmesis Bar
Tue 27 May NOTTINGHAM Rescue Rooms
Wed 28 May CARDIFF The Barfly
Thu 29 May BRISTOL Cube
Fri 30 May OXFORD Wheatsheaf
Tue 03 June LONDON Play Louder Club at The Barfly



www.thethirdeyefoundation.com

(SMOG)

Supper

(Smog) is back and "Supper" is ready

"An album of warm beauty" 4/5 Bang

"Supper displays a real empathy that revels in the interconnectedness of life, it's another stage in (this) great escape" 4/5 Mojo

"Callahan classic, dissecting love and lust with a shard of diamond from a broken engagement ring" The Observer

"Supper is one of (Smog)'s warmest, most lived-in records" 4/5 The Independent

"Few, if any, songwriters can equal him right now" The Daily Telegraph

"Maestra from heaven!" The Guardian



www.dosomethingpretty.com

Bitstream

News and more from under the radar.

Compiled by The Trawler

One sick widow: Lydia Lunch

'Highness of soul', jazz singer, pianist and activist **Nina Simone** died of natural causes aged 70 on 21 April. Born Eunice Waymon in North Carolina in 1933, she first came to notice at the tail end of the 50s with "My Baby Just Cares For Me" and her version of "I Loves You Porgy". With "Mississippi Goddam" (1963) she became one of the first African-American artists to take a prominent stand on racial issues and she remained an unequivocal campaigner for civil rights for the rest of her life. For more on her life and career, see Ian Penman's appreciation on page 25 >> Results just in from this year's **Prix Ars Electronica**: The Golden Nica went to Cosmoji, aka Ami Yoshida and Sachiko M (Japan), while Maja Radje (Norway) and Hecker (Austria) received distinctions. More details at www.aec.at/ >> **Summer Crane**, guitarist and vocalist for No Wave pioneers Merz, died of lymphoma on 15 April at St Vincent's Hospital in New York. Crane was first heard fronting Merz on the infamous 1979 'No New York' compilation and later on the Mars EP. Gathering together a bunch of Downtown habitués, Crane recorded John Gavroni, a No Wave version of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, before concentrating on painting and art criticism. He is survived by his wife Sue >> The Association of British Jazz Musicians is running a campaign against the **Licensing Bill** which is currently in committee in the House of Commons. The bill would do away with the 'two in a bar rule', which allows groups of up to two members to perform on licensed premises without a public entertainment license. The

bill is being seen as a threat to the vitality of Britain's live music scene. Go to www.abjm.org.uk for more information >> Start camping out now: The Merce Cunningham Dance Company has commissioned **Radiohead** and **Sigur Rós** to create music for Split Sides, which will be premiered at New York's Brooklyn Academy of Music on 14 October. For the first night only, each group will perform their own 20 minute compositions live on stage with the dancers >> *The Future Is Not What It Used To Be*, Mike Taunia's film about the Finnish electronic music visionary **Erik Kuolemien** (soo Cross Platform, The Wire 225), will be screened as part of the opening events for the 50th Vantaa Biennale this month. After the last screening, there will be a special tribute concert, featuring Panomio, Carl Michael Von Hausswolff and Erik Kuolemien himself. A DVD entitled *The Dawn Of DMW* contains the documentary, plus Kuolemien's various short films and animations and concert footage from the early 70s >> So you can't batmote to save your life, but still want to control the wibes at e! nightclub? Fret not, Dutch 'aroma jockey' ODO#7 has just developed the career path for you. As the world's first aroma jockey, ODO#7 uses hotplates and charcoal plates as turntables as he mixes a soundsynchronised blend of 160 scents. If you want to perfect that seamless blend of storax and sandalwood, point your browser to www.onrevoltage.com/odo7 >> Bret Wood's **Hell's Highway**, a film about American highway safety films and the men who made them, is currently making the

rounds of America's art house circuit. The film features scenes from 20 vintage drivers' education films as well as music chosen and made by Wire contributor Alan Usher >> On (English) rose, that art star, based on several years worth of exclusive interviews and access to personal archives, *The Wire's* David Keenan has written a book about *Wire*. *Wire Wound, Coil and Current 93*. Called *England's Hidden Reverse*, the book is published by SAF. A launch party with readings by Keenan will take place at Glasgow's Monorail Music (5 June, 7:30pm, www.monorailmusic.co.uk) >> Following EMF's purchase of *Mute*, **Daniel Miller** has set up his own independent label, Credible Sexy Units. His first signing is analogue pop outfit *Mo Twenty* who recently supported Erasure on tour >> **Lydia Lunch** has a new project, *Wiling Victim*, her latest harbinger of sonic schizophrenia. The group's four piece line-up includes Nels Cline, Aggs Kaya, Norman Westerberg and Vinnie Signorelli (the latter three former players with *Foetus* and *Swans*), as well as Spanish filmmakers Josep Jordana and Marc Vizcaino >> **Hermann Nitsch** has gone one better than Merzbow by creating a 51 disc box set, *Die Musik 6-Tage-Spiels 81* CD-R box. The edition of 40 copies is signed, numbered and handmade from black linen, and along with the CD-Rs contains an original drawing by Nitsch, the full documentation from the six day *Aktion* from 1998 over three books, and a poster. A snip at \$1150. For more information, go to www.forcedexplosure.com/ □



Death Row

How would Holger Czukay spend his last day on Earth?

You are allowed...

Three records

Sid Vicious' "I Did It My Way"

Karlheinz Stockhausen *Hymnen*

Franz Schubert, *Death And The Maiden*

One film

Metropolis by Fritz Lang

One book

Alice In Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Three visitors

WC Fields, the Pope, Peter Ustinov

Last meal

Smashed carrots with mashed apples and squeezed oranges plus raped lemons, peeled pressed kiwi with sugar and a tiny bit of zydeko (strong poison). Hmmm, delicious!

Final message for the world

Better rich and healthy than poor and sick

Music for the funeral

The BBC signal for Germany during World War Two □

Holger Czukay & U-She's *The New Millennium* is out now on Dignose



new single

12 may 2003

taken from the album **◎**

released on black 3" disc, 10" stencil pack and
dvd / cd double pack featuring all their videos.



Sigur Rós

limited edition double
vinyl album now available



distributed by vinyl at the alk



Rock 'n' roll ball of flame.
By Marc Masters

"We're always trying to do something other than what we come up with, so in that sense our sound hasn't even come together," says Sightings bassist Richard Hoffman, asked to pinpoint when the Brooklyn trio's maximal, crushing attack first coagulated. "It's the nature of trying to have your own sound; you don't know exactly what you are after because you haven't heard it before."

Hoffman's aim may appear high, but after only three albums, Sightings are almost there. Their pounding distortion reveals a distinctive line of antecedents, including the Industrial clatter of *Erin Graebe Neuhausen*, the syringe-strewn gutter infected by Pussy Galore and Harry Pusey, the layered overload of High Rise and Boredoms, even the kiddle nightmares of Happy Flowers.

The group's latest album, *Absolutes*, rips open with "White Keys", which encapsulates Sightings' hallmark — infinite volume, tribal trashcan drums, bloody-lipped vocals buried in the burning mix like a melted block, box in an aeroplane wreck — in a mere two and a half minutes. From there, the needles relentlessly slash the red, from the rhythmic drilling of "Anna Mae Wong" to the timeless mechanical loop of "Bishops", which somehow induces hallucinations of *Anchoiro* played through a lawnmower. "We're at a point where our sounds have melted together," says drummer John Lockie. "It's not as obvious what the drums are doing, what the guitar is doing, and so on. Like on 'Infinity Of Steps', the heavy bass tone is actually drums."

Sightings' merciless aural assault began in 1998, when Lockie and guitarist Mark Morgan, after jamming together for a year, found Hoffman through an

advertisement. At first the trio was instrumental, but "it was getting boring," says Morgan. "It was kind of anal actually. So I started singing, and it sort of freed the songs, made them more open-ended."

"It needed to become crazier," says Hoffman. "We were just getting our feet on the ground, not really taking chances. So we reconfigured things, and tried to find a way to avoid writing riffs or doing staid rock stuff." 2001 brought a 7" on Minneapolis noise imprint Freedom From, and a notoriously no-fi live cassette on Spilt. A year later, Sightings' self-titled debut emerged via the raing Providence label Load Records. With its bruising tracks like "Cuckoo" and the lobotomizing "I Feel Like A Porsche", Sightings has all the immediacy and raw energy of an early punk record. "I think we all had an 'Oh shit, this might be the only record we put out' attitude," says Hoffman. "We were too concerned with paying homage to our first couple of years of existence. The fact that we were putting out a record at all really took us by surprise."

But they didn't pull out all the stops until their second LP, *Michigan Haters*, released by Psycho-Path, a Brooklyn label run by Russian Prog rock aficionados. The difference is clearest on the reprise of "I Feel Like A Porsche", which slathers its predecessor in a massive layer of sludge. Other flash-floods like the Krautshell "Chili Dog" and the skull-preparing "Ichy/Ic" drown any ears brave enough to ride. "It's certainly the most stark ravaging pissed-off stuff we've put on an album," says Morgan.

Since Sightings sound constantly tests the limits of their gear, sticking their microphone-busting clutter in a studio seems futile, and so far each album consists of

live four-track recordings. "We record most of our practice sessions, and what goes on the record are the best takes," says Hoffman. "We haven't done any real overdubbing or editing. The only editing we've done is cutting a jam off before it actually ended."

"We'd like a record in a studio, use more tracks and instruments," says Hoffman. "The problem is where do you go when you're starting from such a big sound? How do you change without it being a letdown?" For now, the Sightings archival approach turns record making into a muddy archaeological dig. "There are things on our records that I have no recollection of," says Morgan. "Like 'Canadian Money', I don't remember playing that at all. And 'Reduction' we had played once or twice and thrown away. Then we went back and found it, and we were like, 'This rules.'"

Live, Sightings are a sweaty fog of stretched strings and strained muscles. "We still have a lot of room for improvement live. For a while we were more about getting drunk and abusing ourselves, our instruments, and our audience," says Hoffman. "But we shoot for more subtleties now, and we are really hit or miss. I think it comes with trying not to sound familiar."

"Some of our songs are really intense, really repetitive," says Lockie. "We get exhausted after a while, but that's why we do it. We want to push it as far as we can, and see how it comes out." Alongside this physical intensity is a beautifully uncomplicated delight in the power of unhammed noise. "Our music is not some kind of bogus 'fuck you' statement," says Morgan. "I like this sound, and this band is just fun as all hell to play in." □ *Absolutes* is out this month on Load Records (CD) and Riot Season (vinyl).

JAGA JAZZIST THE STIX

RELEASED
06/05/03

ZEN 81
NINJATUNE



OUT NOW

- 027 Keith Rowe/Thomas Lohn/Marcus Schindler
Rabbit Run
028 Jérôme Noetinger/Erik Milt
What's A Wonderful World
029 Günter Müller/Otomo Yoshihide
Tashiroi
030-2 Keith Rowe/John Tilbury
Duas for Boris
- UPCOMING RELEASES**
- 031 Martin Sæverød/Martin Braudebyg
032 Matt Davis/Mel Darrent/
Mark Westell (Jaka Wall)
033-040 AMPLIFY 2002:
balance box set (7 CDs/1 DVD,
details to be announced soon)
041 Sechika M./Yoshimura
Nakamura/Otomo Yoshihide
042 Keith Rowe/Axel
Ørnsjø/Franz Heitlinger
043 Martin Tétreault/
Li Qian Nink

ALSO AVAILABLE

- 021 NIMEO/Jahn Teibury
The Hands of Caravaggio
022 paine z +
023 Polwischel/Tenniss
Wrapped Islands
024 Cosmos Years
025 Burkhard Stangl/
Oak 13 ab
026 Andrea Neumann/
Balkanized Baby (Lillegård)
- LIVE**
- AMPLIFY 2004: addition
May 7-9, 2004: Cologne
and May 14-16: Berlin
(co-organized by Keith Rowe
and Jon Abrey)

erstwhile records

www.erstwhilerecords.com



CLIFF MARTINEZ



Cristal method soundtracks.
By Richard Henderson

Writing film music can be a reclusive pursuit, as drummer turned film composer Cliff Martinez knows only too well. Martinez describes his housebound existence as solitary in the extreme when working on his scores for Steven Soderbergh films such as *Kafka*, *Traffic* or, most recently, *Solans*. "The pizza slides under the door at five o'clock," he says mournfully. "When I've done the film, I've got to make new friends, because all the old ones have given up on me." Still, there are far worse places to be marooned than Martinez's home, overlooking the western verge of California's San Fernando Valley. His entrance hall sports framed album art from *Tour Mask Replica* signed "Don" (as in Van Vliet, aka Captain Beefheart), a testament to Martinez's past life as drummer in the final incarnation of The Magic Band. Where the dining room would normally be, several percussion instruments of imposing design and scale now reside. Notable among these, its metal and glass armature glinting in the morning sun, is the Cristal, one of the legendary "Structures Sonores" invented in 1954 by the French instrument designers Bertrand and François Baschet.

"My parents took me to a show of their musical sculptures at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1966," Martinez recalls, producing a vintage 10" album of the Baschets' music issued by the museum for the occasion. The huge instruments, with their blossom-like metal resonating cones and sound generating mechanics similar to a glass harmonica, made an indelible impression on the youngster. Long after moving to California in 1976, and well after his stints as drummer for *The Weirdos*, Lydia Lunch, Jim Thirkwell, The Red Hot Chili Peppers and The Dickies, Martinez flew to France and sought out the Baschet brothers. He used the Cristal on his recent score for director Soderbergh's new, post-Tarkovsky adaptation of Polish writer Stanislaw Lem's 1963 novel *Solans*. The soundtrack is an amalgam of ambient orchestral charts and matching electronic timbres, melded with gamelan percussion and the eerie strains of the Baschets' glittering construction.

Martinez entered the world of film music when a tape college he had constructed ("Several of my friends

making aggressively weird noises, which I assigned to pads on a MIDI percussion controller") led to scoring an episode of comedian Paul Reubens's transgressive mid-80s TV hit, *Fee-Wee's Playhouse*. This was heard by Steven Soderbergh, who tapped Martinez to provide the music for his first feature, *sex, lies and videotape*. Martinez has since received compositional credit on most of Soderbergh's films, in addition to critical favourites *Pump Up The Volume* and *Grey's Anatomy*. His achievement is impressive, given that he is largely self-educated in a realm where few expect rock drummers to emerge as successful composers.

Then again, drumming for Captain Beefheart And The Magic Band during the early 80s was a singular education. The liner notes accompanying *Grow Fins*, the Beefheart retrospective set issued by Revenant, describe a tragic scenario: Martinez lands his dream gig, only to see Beefheart retire a short time later. It was also disappointing, Martinez admits with laughter, "finding out that your idol is an abusive tyrant, *Ice Cream For Crow* was the first record [Van Vliet] decided not to support with a tour. He did an Anton Corbijn-directed video; that was the end of that record's promotion. Even among my peers there was no support or recognition. It was the hardest gig I'd ever had, 24 hours a day and very demanding, with zero recognition."

"The line-up that I belonged to were all scholars of the old band," continues Martinez. "How that original sound was created, I don't know. My guess is that all the band members made significant contributions and Don was the leader. Don would say to me, after handing over a cassette, 'Learn this beat', I'd take it home and would find a recording of Don and his wife Jan in the kitchen. It just sounded like the tape recorder is running while they're talking and doing the dishes. Most of the tape featured huge WHOOSH noises of the faucet being turned on, for an hour. Occasionally I'd hear plates clinking. Though I knew that some creative interpretation of his instructions was required, I listened to this thinking I must have received the wrong tape. I provided a rendition of what I heard, but it was a stretch. You had to fill in some serious blanks. The next day, I played my subjective

drumming response to what I'd heard on this tape and Don said, 'That's it, man. You knew what I wanted.' So I was extremely grateful."

"A lot of things were like that, 'Give me giant blue babies levitating over the mountain tops', and I'd just play. Gary Lucas [Magic Band guitarist] has famously described this process as throwing a deck of cards in the air, taking a picture, then recreating that."

The Solans orchestrations were crafted by Zappa and Beefheart alumnus Bruce Fowler and engineer Leanne Unger, noted for her previous work with Louie Anderson and Leonard Cohen, who recorded Martinez's own gamelan and Cristal performances at his Casablanca studio.

Deciding to eschew performing in favour of composing, Martinez confides, "I almost hung up my drumsticks after Beefheart. Normal drum playing had no appeal left. I became incredibly jaded. The response to *Ice Cream For Crow* was disappointing, but musically it was a Mount Rushmore moment for me. It took me deep into an arcane style of drumming that I'd admired for years and finally got to play Art Tripp, another Zappa and Beefheart percussionist, once said, 'The higher the elevation, the sparser the vegetation', meaning the wider you get, the fewer opportunities exist to make money with your skills."

Martinez's scoring skills will next be on display with *Wonderland*, director James Cox's dramatisation of a sensational Los Angeles murder case which involved porn star John Holmes. Its tone much darker and funnier than Solans, the music for *Wonderland* has a "Starkey & Hatch vibe, with lots of Roland 303 Bassline sounds," remarks Martinez, citing the wonders of the tiny synth much loved by the hard Trance set. "It's yielding some fascinating music, though. I'm using the Cristal, which works marvelously during crime scenes, especially those featuring huge plumes of blood on the music. Large groups of people are exposed to unusual symphonic music in movie theatres, as well as ethnic and avant garde music. There's more range in film music and that's very attractive to me." □ Solans: Original Motion Picture Score is available on Superbit/Edel



MIGU MIGU
Migu n'Cometie. Iremone Video Audio Records. £2.99.
Kermit the Frog is nothing compared to this alien, who has also managed one of the week's most surreal items in a row of poetry and song. In parts the album shows the more experimental acts of *Cometas Sobre Nubes* CD.



JAGA JAZZIST
Animal Child EP
7 track mini album from Norway's rising underground jazz band. Includes tracks from their *Dark Separation* album. *For Life* and *Tell Tell* are not contained.

£11.99/CD



11 HEATHMAN'S ROAD, PARSONS GREEN, LONDON SW9 4TJ
PHONE 020 7731 1129 FAX 020 7731 3748 EMAIL: INFO@CARDOREC.COM.UK



RESIDENTS
Residents Of Park On The Children's Officers
The big, beatific, brainy rock of the Residents. Of this collection is a mix of studio recordings, 1 CD & 1 DVD of live material + a super deluxe 48 page booklet. A very limited edition.

£40/CD+DVD



VARIOUS
Psy-A Stripper Razzle
One Man will be the last to work in 2000 this cheap cassette features tracks from the likes of the Residents and cover by underground label The Kicks, The Presidents, Thee Cooper, Movements and many more.

£8.99/CD



MUSILGAUZE
Chapter Of Fury
The best tracks from the band's vinyl releases from four early Musilgauze vinyl releases from 1985-87. Ten beautiful, often subtle tracks.

£12/TWO HANDBOUND CD



PULSE PROGRAMMING
Take One Second
The Pulse Programming collective edited vocals or create a handful of pop gems this anniversary with their inspiring instrumental. With "Sala..." they have created a defining record for contemporary electronic music in 2000.

£12/HANDBOUND CD



NED MICHAEL HAGGERTY & THE HOWLING HEX
The short record from Ned Michael Haggerty. Demo tape. Features as a solo artist and bandleader of indie pop and experimental rock.

DRAG CITY DR441LP/CD



KPT MICHIGAN
Paper Player Paper
Kurt Vilehnen & Michael Berkman, who were *Screamer*, *The Red Kite Smith*, *There Is A Light That Never Goes Out* and *The Light*. 2000. The result is futuristic. It is obvious there is strong punk ethos, with elements of rock and techno in some tracks, hints of melody and noise.

£8/ARTISTIC CD

Ken Nordine
Wink



[The User]
Abandon



Broker/Dealer
Initial Public Offering

**SELLER - DEALER
INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING**

1986	348	348	348	348	348
1987	112	112	112	112	112
1988	1722	1680	1680	1680	1680
1989	112	112	112	112	112
1990	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700
1991	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700
1992	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1993	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1994	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1995	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1996	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1997	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1998	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
1999	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2000	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2001	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2002	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2003	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2004	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2005	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2006	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2007	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2008	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2009	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2010	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2011	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2012	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2013	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2014	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2015	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2016	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2017	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2018	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2019	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2020	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2021	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2022	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2023	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2024	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2025	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2026	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2027	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2028	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2029	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2030	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2031	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2032	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2033	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2034	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2035	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2036	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2037	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2038	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2039	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2040	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2041	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2042	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2043	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2044	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2045	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2046	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2047	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2048	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2049	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2050	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2051	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2052	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2053	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2054	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2055	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2056	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2057	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2058	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2059	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2060	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2061	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2062	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2063	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2064	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2065	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2066	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2067	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2068	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2069	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2070	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2071	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2072	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2073	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2074	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2075	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2076	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2077	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2078	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2079	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2080	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2081	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2082	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2083	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2084	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2085	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2086	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2087	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2088	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2089	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2090	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2091	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2092	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2093	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2094	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2095	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2096	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2097	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2098	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2099	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2100	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2101	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2102	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2103	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2104	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2105	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2106	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2107	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2108	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2109	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2110	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2111	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2112	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2113	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2114	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2115	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2116	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2117	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2118	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2119	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2120	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2121	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2122	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2123	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2124	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2125	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2126	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2127	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2128	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2129	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2130	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2131	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2132	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2133	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2134	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2135	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2136	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2137	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2138	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2139	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2140	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2141	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2142	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2143	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2144	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2145	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2146	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2147	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2148	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2149	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2150	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2151	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2152	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2153	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2154	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2155	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2156	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2157	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2158	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2159	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2160	1747	1747	1747	1747	1747
2161					

ASHMUS TIETCHENS

Sceptic thinktank.

By Jim Haynes

"With EM Cioran, I share a sceptical attitude towards history, mankind and questionable metaphysics," the German electronic composer Asmus Tietchens says, explaining why quotes by the Romanian philosopher are scattered throughout the liner notes of his recordings. "Cioran was in no way a pessimistic thinker, he was straight sceptic. That's a big difference."

While the Cologne based Tietchens is quick to clarify that his music is not merely the result of dry conceptual exercises, his labour-intensive investigations into electroacoustics, digital synthesis, and tape music hinge upon an elemental scepticism about the conventions and truisms of contemporary music. "I try to perceive consciously the audible part of the world," he says, "and I try to explore parts of the audible part of the world I've never heard before. The latter one is the main power behind my musical activities. Simply put, I have to create audible structures because I'm seeking for any new part of yet unknown musical areas. By the way, a lot of my curiosity is permanently satisfied by listening to other people's fine music. I'm a very busy listener."

Despite the fact that he began tinkering with sound back in 1965 while still at school, it wasn't until 1980 that Tietchens' first recording, *Nachtstücke (Night Pieces)* (Egg), was released, although the music had been completed two years earlier. *Nachtstücke*, alongside a quartet of releases on Sky (Bösew, Split-Europa, in Die Nacht und die Lila), marked a "short pop intermezzo" for Tietchens, in which the quintessential sounds of synths such as the Moog Sonic Six and Minimoog offered a template of soft tones for Tietchens to sculpt into simple melodic passages and oscillating rhythms, hinting at a slightly more obtuse nature than his Kosmische brothers in Cluster (with whom he briefly collaborated on the 1977 LP *Cluster And Emo*). More recently, in the late 90s he returned to take the warm vapours with two quasi-listening synth exotic LPs under the name Hemisfer-Sunset, *Musik Aus Dem Aroma Club* and *Rendezvous Im Aroma Club*.

However, back in the early 80s, Tietchens had witnessed the flourishing of such groups as Nurse With Wound, Negativland and P36.04, who pushed out of punk and industrial culture and into a fertile

hybridization with the plastic arts of *musique concrète* and xenism. It was at this point that he came to the conclusion that his future was not as a pop composer. In 1982, he had a fortuitous meeting with David Elliott, who ran a British fanzine called *Neumusik*. Tietchens recounts, "David encouraged me to contact Steve Stapleton [of Nurse With Wound] and to send him demo material with my... let's say, more stoned stuff. Steve enjoyed the stuff, and two years later *Favonien Letzter Hausmusik* was released on his United Dreams label."

Despite its initial small pressing of only 500 copies, *Favonien Letzter Hausmusik (Shapes Of Future Music Making In The Home!)* – a British album of raw tape constructions and jarringly electroacoustics, mapping out a broad range of exaggerated textures and queasy chromatics which put two of his influences, Ornette Coleman and Karlheinz Stockhausen, in communion – remains one of Tietchens' landmark albums, in which he returned to many of the radical tape music methods which he began in the late 60s. *Hausmusik*, in fact, features five compositions from 1967 alongside similarly styled contemporary recordings. Since then, Tietchens has pursued complex sets of abstractions, which he poetically calls "the majestic stillness of the organic". He continues, "This is an absolute music, meaning that it should not be more than itself, and that it should contain no message except an aesthetic one. Constructing and recording my music is permanent research work, and the studio is not a holy room, but a kind of laboratory without windows – literally. I will not run the risk of being distracted by visible phenomena."

While the mournful abstractions for prepared piano on *Noituno* (1987) or the mechanical tape loop constructions of *Stuper Mundi* (1990) sound wholly unique, Tietchens claims his studio is rather conventional: "My main tools are the mixing desk, the multitracking devices – both analogue and digital – and a so-called 'Festifilterbank', custom-built, for extreme filtering. Apart from the Festifilterbank, I do not use any tool which would not be used by other musicians or composers. The devices themselves do not inspire me, because I know for sure that all my ideas can be realised. So I totally concentrate on my musical plans. Apart from some small software updates and two new mixing desks, I have used the same equipment since

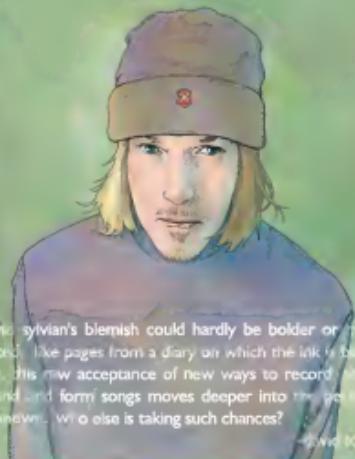
the early 90s. It is perfect for my approach."

Recently, the Berlin label *Die Stadt* has begun an impressive 18 CD reissue campaign of Tietchens' back catalogue, gradually making available all of his early vinyl albums released between 1980-01. The aforementioned *Nachtstücke* leads off the series, released as a double disc set with the archival recording *Adventures in Sound* that dates back to Tietchens' earliest works in 1965, paralleling many of the sounds on the *Hausmusik* album. A collection of recordings made in by Tietchens, Oiko Becker (who still lends a production hand to Tietchens' work) and Hans Deter Wohlmann, *Adventures in Sound* is a playful, anti-structuralist mess of sound with a spirited grasp of psychedelic improvisation and free jazz run through primitive tape machine tricks (background masking, transposed manipulation, rudimentary splicing, etc.). Another ongoing project is the duo *Kontakt Der Jinglings* with drone connoisseur Thomas Körner. Their recent fourth CD, *On Die Stadt*, is number -1 (the series is numbered backwards). Curiously, all of these recordings have been documentations of live performances, where Tietchens feels this duo works best, while almost all his other collaborations have been mail art projects, firmly entrenched in the studio.

Far from resting on the laurels of this retrospective series, Tietchens maintains an unceasing pace in his work, with plans for a fourth collaboration with David Lee Meyers (formerly known as Arceno Device); and is currently completing the fourth in his *Tieltwings* series for the Mills Plateaux subsidiary Ritorrem. In light of his numerous activities, Tietchens hopes that his work offers the potential for his audience to ask questions and participate in his discoveries. He posits, "Perhaps the music I compose seems a bit 'outlandish'. But I've noticed that experts as well as untrained listeners are able to enjoy my music. No, I do not think that it's necessary to know the culture around noisy, concrete, or electronic music to enjoy my stuff." □ *Gamm-Menge* is cut now on Ritorrem; *Die Stadt*'s reissue programme is ongoing (see www.diestadtmitmusic.de). Tietchens & Jon Mueller's 7 Sticks is out now on Auf Abwegen. Asmus Tietchens Website: www.tietchens.de. Thanks to Jon Leidecker for help with this article

david sylvian | blemish

new release on samadhi sound - available 22 May
exclusively online at davidsylvian.com



david sylvian's blemish could hardly be bolder or more naked. like pages from a diary on which the ink is barely dry, this raw acceptance of new ways to record shape sound and form songs moves deeper into the personal unknown. who else is taking such chances?

-david loop-

an impromptu suite of songs for guitar, electronics and voice. an emotionally raw, minimal work, of immediacy and stark beauty with outstanding contributions from derek bailey and christian fennesz.



SMITTEN NO LONGER ME THE
ONLY DAUGHTER RENDER THE
VOW IT'S MY HOME NOW THIS,
YOUR ONE AND ONLY WARNING
PLEASE BE GONE BY MORNING
AND IF THE ENDING IS TO CLEAN
THE QUIRK THE FUSS THE
VASELINE SHE WON'T EVEN
SEE IT COMING ROLL THEM
ROLL THEM OVER, ROLL THEM
OVER ME, THE ONLY DAUGHTER

painting by akira takai

John Cale

5 Tracks

out 26th May

www.john-cale.com



deadcan dance *wake*

double cd anthology

Waka was compiled by Brendan Perry and Liss Gerrard as an introduction to the music of Dead Can Dance and spans their whole career from the 1981 demo of *Frontiers* to *The Lotus Eaters*, a recording from the abandoned 1998 album sessions.

toward the within dvd

The acclaimed in-concert movie, directed by Mark Magidson (*Waka!*), is now available on a special price DVD with additional videos.

available now

www.4ad.com



A survey of sounds from around the planet.

This month: Eran Sachs Investigates Fact Records' struggle to fill the cultural void in Israel's largest, poorest city

One nation underground: Yuppex With Jeeps (left), Charlie Megra

GLOBAL EAR: JERUSALEM



"Jerusalem is not really a city," contends Aviad Albert of the local electronic duo TaePet. "The population is quite big, the separation between the different groups is so fierce, that there is no actual common urban space. Each group remains sealed and leads its own closed life." The inhabitants of Jerusalem, Israel's biggest and poorest city, are equally divided between Arabs, most of whom are Palestinians living in East Jerusalem under Israeli occupation; Orthodox religious Jews, generally very poor, but politically dominant; and secular Jews living mainly in West Jerusalem. These three groups are in turn fragmented into even smaller communities. The occupation leaves its traces everywhere. With the increasing violence and worsening economic depression across a city whose municipal authority pays little attention to the needs of its citizens, and whose secular portion is rapidly diminishing, it is no wonder there are few opportunities for artistic and musical activity to take place in public.

In recent years, several groups of young artists from West Jerusalem have been attempting to change this situation. The activities of the action group Electronic Front and the Techno parties thrown by 1000 Meter Underground (both are collectives involving promoters, artists and other proles for electronic music), as well as the broadcasts on the pirate station, Periscope Radio, are all driven by the necessity of filling Israel's cultural void. But with no real chance of making any profit, all these groups operate on a purely philanthropic basis. As Albert points out, "Such phenomena are characteristic of a small place."

When things do happen, audiences are quick to show their commitment. In April 2002, a suicide bomber blew himself up in a marketplace, just yards from where an art event called (Heart 2 was supposed to start a few hours later. Despite the disruption and destruction, the event went ahead, attended by more than 270 people.

The most stable element in Jerusalem's music scene over the last few years has been the CDR label Fact Records, run by the 26 year old Yoram Elakim. Apart from being one of the very few labels in the entire country, Fact was the first notable label in the city to persistently produce cutting edge musicians since the 80s. It was conceived as an outlet for Israel's bedroom musicians. Elakim ran a record store called Balance, which became a hub for local musicians who

regularly bombarded him with their tapes and demos. Three and a half years ago, he started releasing small-run CD-Rs of this otherwise overlooked material. Hearing the forgotten 1989 album *Jehova* by the avant-rock/industrial/HipHop group Israel, who made subversive calls for a total change in national consciousness (a utopian state of mind they call "The Israeli Revolution"), Elakim decided he would also reissue out of print recordings of older, non-mainstream Israeli music. "[*Jehova*] seemed to me like a real radical piece to come out in this country at the time," he explains. "Those people were militants, but on a par with the avant-garde world of their time."

Throughout the first year Fact's catalogue stretched to around 20 releases. "I believe in a community," Elakim says modestly. "The idea was to become like this community centre." Three years on, Fact became the most active independent label in Israel, representing a huge range of contemporary music that's barely heard outside the country. The catalogue now spans over 60 releases, with certain titles selling hundreds of copies all over Israel. With time, specific stylistic divisions have evolved. Artists like Yuppex With Jeeps create alternative rock sung in Hebrew. Others choose to sing in English, like 37 year old Tsuyki from Rorot-Gan, who combines acoustic instruments and electronics in a kind of melodic, gloomy Krautrock. Among a raft of electronica artists and HipHop projects like Subsonic, there have been further rereleases such as Plastic Venus's self-titled 1991 debut – the first noise album to be released in Israel, from Tel Aviv's thriving late 80s alternative rock scene.

But the label's achievement does not lie solely in the variety of its releases. The catalogue foregrounds a multifaceted, critical, alternative Israeli culture different from the uniformity presented in the media, one which refuses the prevailing political, cultural and artistic consensus. "Summer Meeting," Purple 59's collaboration with rap star Shai'anin Street and Palestinian rapper TN, deals explicitly with the Occupation and individual responsibility (mainstream Israeli HipHop just won't go there). Charlie Megra & The Lowlife Girls' dreamy tributes to guitar-based pop ballads deconstructs Israel's musical history by acknowledging the existence of an early rock 'n' roll culture in the 50s, pointing to an alternative to the ubiquitous military bands of the time. Meanwhile,

TaePet deliberately hold back the grooves in order to move away from MID-based industrial metalics, in a manner that recalls Brian Eno or Microtonos. The aforementioned Israel call for a revolution of the mind, renouncing anything Jewish. Juan Spady's Lenses project expresses the personal pain of the Palestinian minority in "Tied Up" and "The Old Men", the first alternative rock songs in Israel to be sung in Arabic.

In March this year Fact released two compilations, *Electronic Facts* and *Fact By Fact 2*. They focus on a wide range of electronic styles; from the Mix/MSP work of artists such as Ron Stein and D Fire; the playful Techno-dub of Bryn Reches; the Cosi-Led Easy Listening melodies of Gobert. The release of these two compilations was celebrated at a mini-festival held at three different locations in Tel Aviv, and attended by more than 1000 people.

A few days after the festival – the same day the Americans invade Iraq – I throw my gas mask in the car and drive over to interview Elakim, who drops a bombshell: "I've decided to shut down the label." Once he left the record store, he explains, the label could no longer sustain itself according to its original model. "I should have been on 'cruse control' by now," he complains, "but it didn't work, because everything started going backwards in this country, the currency started losing its value, the economy is in a state of depression... really became more and more radical. It's unbelievable."

So once again there is a void in Jerusalem that needs filling. Fact has provided a source of energy and a model for the next wave – there are now at least five other labels operating in Jerusalem. "Our vision is different," says SC Dspairal of the Miklatiklum.com imprint, "but Yoram showed how things could be done. I saw it and said, 'Hey, I can also design covers and burn CDs.'" Itamar Weiner and Harel Schreiber started their own label Ak Duck, which focuses on electro, after Yoram rejected their CD. "He paved the way for us," says Weiner. "Fact has a good and caring system, but it leaves out the genre we like. So we can do something along the same lines, only with music we like." □ Fact Records ceased operating earlier this year, but are still selling CD-Rs via their Website: www.factrecords.co.il. Eran Sachs's collaboration with singer Rockstar Wannabe appears on the compilation *Electronic Facts*.

CABARET VOLTAIRE

METHODOLOGY '74/'78.
ATTIC TAPES;

OUT 09/06/03 Available via Mutebank & all good record shops

Still available The Original Sound of Sheffield 78/82 BEST OF (featuring original versions of Nag Nag Nag and Yester)
Available on nowonme in July 'Yeshir' featuring mixes by Richard H Kirk, Alter Ego and All Seeing I



3CD boxset containing rare and unreleased material 51 tracks, including unreleased versions of 'Nag Nag Nag' and 'Do the Mussolini (Headkick)'

Cabaret Voltaire CDs available via Mutebank: The Voice Of America, Red Mecca, Live At The YMCA, Listen Up With..., Living Legends, Three Mantras, Mix-Up, 2 x 45, Johnny Yesno, Hall, Live At The Lyceum, The Drain Train/The Pressure Company, 1974-76

mutebank mail order available from web: www.mutebank.co.uk e-mail: info@mutebank.co.uk tel: 020 8964 0029
www.mute.com



between the lines – new music beyond categories available!

Hannes Enziburger

Tango 1-8

btl 030/EFA 63831-2

Thomas Berghammer (flugelhorn), Otto Lechner (accordion), Hannes Enziburger (double bass)

Hannes Enziburger's tangos are a sheer delight. They sound relaxed and non-intentional with their well-balanced combination of pain, comedy, sentimentality and grace. With this production, the prodigy of the Austrian scene has presented his masterpiece.

Release Date: 27th June 2003

And more Enziburger at between the lines ...

Hannes Enziburger

Songs To Anything That Moves
btl 022/EFA 10192-2

Thomas Berghammer (trumpet, flugelhorn), Hans Stener (bass clarinet), Oskar Aichinger (piano), Hannes Enziburger (bass)

Enziburger's btl-debut «Songs To Anything That Moves» is a very personal exploration of the work of Carla Bley. The spirit and the vibrancy of her music are preserved even though Enziburger's quartet has found its very own, unique sound.

between the lines Collection 2003

John Lindberg – Ruminations
Upon Ives And Gottschalk
btl 025/EFA 10195-2

Andreas Wüllers featuring Paul Bley
In The North
btl 026/EFA 10196-2

James Emery | Transformations
btl 027/EFA 10197-2

Yitzhak Yedid | Myth Of The Cave
btl 028/EFA 10198-2

Oskar Aichinger | Synapsis
btl 029/EFA 10199-2

between the lines

INVISIBLE JUKEBOX:

DAVID SYLVIAN

Every month we play a musician a series of records which asked to identify and comment on – with no prior knowledge of what they're about to hear.

Tested by Christoph Cox, Photos by Chris Buck



Born David Batt in 1958, David Sylvian was raised in South London. He began playing guitar at the age of 12 and, four years later, formed Japan with his brother, drummer Steve Jansen, and schoolmates Mick Karn and Richard Barbieri. After three records for the German label Hansa, Japan signed to Virgin and emerged as stars of the New Romantic scene, crafting an atmospheric synth-pop fronted by Sylvian's quivering baritone. But in 1982, wary of the pop life, the shy and private Sylvian called it quits, disbanding Japan at the height of its fame.

Retreating into the studio, Sylvian began what was to become a long collaboration with Ryuichi Sakamoto, with whom he produced a string of singles, among them "Forbidden Colours", the theme to Nagisa Oshima's 1983 film *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence*. 1984 saw the release of Sylvian's solo masterpiece, *Brilliant Trees*, which included contributions by Sakamoto, Jon Hassell and Holger Czukay. The same year, Sylvian co-directed (with Yasuyuki Yamaguchi) the art films *Preparations For A Journey and Steel Cathedrals*, both shot in Japan. Sylvian's interest in Fourth World Ambient culture found expression on record as well, beginning with the 1985 release *Words With The Shaman* and continuing with two Czukay collaborations, *Plight and Premonition* (1988) and *Flux And Mutability* (1989). In the mid-80s, Sylvian began work with another steadfast collaborator, Robert Fripp, with whom he recorded the double-album *Gone To Earth* (1986).

In 1992, while working on the Sakamoto single "Heartbeat", Sylvian met Ingrid Chavez, a singer and actress who had been a member of Prince's inner circle. The same year, the couple married and moved to Minneapolis, where they spent the remainder of the decade. Sylvian continued his collaborations with Fripp and began a series of recording sessions that resulted in the 1999 release *Dead Bees On A Cake*, which featured Kenny Wheeler, Marc Ribot, Bill Frisell and Talvin Singh.

Dead Bees On A Cake offered musical glimpses into the Hindu mysticism to which Sylvian and Chavez had become devoted. Upon completing the record, the couple and their three children moved to Napa Valley for a brief stay at the ashram of spiritual teacher Shree Ma before relocating to southern New Hampshire, where Sylvian converted an old barn into a music studio and began a new creative phase. He ended his 20 year relationship with Virgin and, earlier this year, launched a new record label, Samadhi Sound. The label's first release, *Sylvian's Own Blemish*, out this month, is a collection of spare but lovely songs that includes duets with Derek Bailey and Christian Fennesz.

The jukebox took place in Sylvian's barn studio in New Hampshire.

TALK TALK

"AFTER THE FLOOD"
FROM LAUGHING STOCK (POLYDOR 1991)

The drama would hint at Talk Talk. But I don't recognize the track.

It's "After The Flood". Talk Talk first came on the scene during Japan's heyday. Do you remember those days with any fondness?

Oh, gosh. It was just a period of constant education. I look at it as basically my schooling. During my years with Japan, I learned how to open up a lot more as a writer, and finally to find a voice that I felt was somewhat true. Up until that time, I felt too insecure to allow my voice to be heard in my own work. Music was something of an act of concealment. And I realized that that was a misuse of the power of music. I wanted to address that, and I felt I'd made some kind of personal leap when I wrote "Ghosts" (1981), and included on Japan's final album, *Tim Drum*. After that, everything fell into place for me and I realized that this was the road I had to walk down, to dig deeper. You like. Talk Talk also shed their New Romantic past to produce much richer, more textural and mysterious music.

There are the ups and downs of growing up in public. You have the means to explore all these different avenues – that's a wonderful aspect. But of course, you make your mistakes as you go along; and people can fall in love with the mistakes and want you to pursue those avenues more than anything else, more than where your interests lie. There's the danger of alienating people as you develop as an artist. It's that idea of remaining creatively vital as opposed to commercially viable – not that those terms are mutually exclusive.

DAVID BOWIE

"IT'S NO GAME (PART 1)"

FROM SCARY MONSTERS (AND GIANT CREEPS) (MIRAGE 1980)

[Instantly], I know this. It's Bowie. Scary Monsters? I don't know the name of the track.

"It's No Game", with Robert Fripp on guitars.

Robert's played some of his best work on other people's material. He knows that too. He loves to just walk into a session and feed back off of the energy in that session. This is a good example of that.

You have said that you don't think your collaboration with Fripp was entirely successful.

Well, the collaboration came at a very difficult time for both me and Robert. I was going through some quite profound psychological difficulties in my life, and he was going through some tortuous legalities with [his record label] EG. I often look back and think it was remarkable that we produced anything together during that period. I felt that Robert and I definitely connected on *Gone To Earth*, and there was talk of pursuing some work together at some point in the future. As he was coming out of retirement, he called me and asked me to become a part of the King Crimson line-up, which I gave serious thought to; but ultimately, I couldn't take on the baggage of that history. I suggested we do something else. But somehow, I feel I was roped into the new Crimson, in a way. But from my perspective, the music provided an outlet for some serious, pent-up aggression, which I don't think I would have been able to explore with such abandon in my own work. It would have surfaced in an entirely other way.

Was Bowie significant for you and Japan?

Oh definitely. He was one of the key influences in the early days. And this is probably one of his strongest records. But what can I say? Around this time, I put aside a lot of the early influences that played such a formative role in my development, because I felt that the influence was overbearing. As a group, we [Japan] were our influences on our sleeve, which I think was endemic in some ways, but in other ways it was detrimental to our own development. So it was

necessary to push that behind us and move on. I found the best way to do that was just to shut the work out entirely.

RYUICHI SAKAMOTO

"DERRIDA/JD002"

FROM DERIDA (KAI 2000)

(Immediately) It's either Takemitsu or Ryuichi. Or Cage.

It's a segment from Sakamoto's soundtrack to the new film, *Derrida*, about the French deconstructionist philosopher Jacques Derrida. It's a really successful soundtrack; it colour the images with a sense of enigma appropriate to Derrida.

That's a great compliment to Ryuichi's ability. You've collaborated with him for more than two decades now.

I've found that, as years have gone on, and in the absence of a permanent band with which to work, he becomes maybe the closest collaborator in that we share a common musical vocabulary. That's so important, I think. To move beyond one's limitations, to develop that vocabulary over a length of time, I think that is what I miss about working within a group. Ryuichi and I rarely use language to point one another in a given direction. We'll play our work to one another, and, immediately, there's a connection and we go with it.

You recently worked with Ryuichi on the Zero Landmine benefit CD. I was surprised to see you so directly take on a political issue in your music.

That's a field that I've always been reluctant to get into. I think that music has a far greater power. It works on far more profound and deeper levels than the political, I mean, yes, it's important sometimes just to get up and say what needs to be said. If nobody else is saying it. But the power of music runs so much deeper; and in that sense, it's a far greater political tool because it has the potential to change fundamentally the mind or the heart of the individual. That is the most profound political act you can make; and I prefer to work on that level of profundity rather than voice openly political statements about this or that subject matter.

Sakamoto's been active in the anti-war movement.
We're working on some music now that he calls 'chain music', which he's sending around to a variety of different people to accompany the anti-war sentiment; and I'm right there with him. It is a challenge to take on this subject matter and not to give in to cliché and a certain amount of dogmatism. It is very challenging, because it's so easy to fail.

HOLGER CZUKAY

"DER OSTEN IST ROT"

FROM DER OSTEN IST ROT (MIRAGE 1986)

I know this. Oh, it's Holger. "The East Is Red"? I haven't heard this in a very long time. It's fantastic. Apparently, he found a statement by a Chinese official claiming that rock music turns people into homosexuals and drug addicts. So he decided to offer this rendering of the Chinese national anthem.

That's right. I remember that. [Laughs] Holger's amazing. I look back to what he was doing when I was working with him and I see that his approach was the same as that of a lot of the younger musicians working today: the detailed sampling of very small fragments of sound and music and then the cut and paste approach to creating work. He was right there, way back on *Movies* (1979). He knew that as well. He was always very aware that what he was doing was the precursor of what was to come. It's just a far more complex procedure with analogue tape, obviously; but it also allowed for a lot of accidents to take place, which is an essential part of what he does. When you're working with Holger, if you find that you're getting close to the performance that you would like to achieve, he

loses interest entirely. And those times when you felt you were really just grappling in the dark for something were the moments that really fascinated him. He caught them on tape. You weren't even aware that you were being recorded.

The records you made with him seemed to take your music in a different direction, toward a kind of fluid, ethereal instrumental music.

It was a great relief to create work in which the central focus was not my voice. I'd been leaning towards that in some of the work I had been doing. I was introducing more and more instrumental passages into the work. The voice was very important to me. It focuses the emotional content of the piece of music, or increases the emotional intensity of a work. In a sense, everything else pivots around that. But sometimes you want the music to be like a landscape in which you can find a whole range of different emotions, depending on your mood, as a listener. What we were doing with *Flight And Promotion* was trying to create a work that was very organic; that had no singular voice. If one of us began to 'perform', it would cause such a disruption in the work, like somebody's ego was forcing its way into the picture, some landscape was about to be peopled; and it felt entirely wrong. He kept that in check more than I did.

Alice Coltrane

"LOVE SUPREME"

FROM WORLD GALAXY/EUPHORIA 1971

Is that Alice Coltrane?

Yes, it's her version of "Love Supreme", featuring the voice of her guru, Swami Satchidananda.

What I like about Alice Coltrane is that it's a progressive form of spiritual music, you know? There are no platitudes in her work and no dogma. It just breathes the spirit that created it. And I find that a rare occurrence in the world of "spiritual music"; I mean the whole New Age movement – I don't think they ever took a leaf out of her or John Coltrane's book! This is profound, spiritual music that touches to the core essence of what it's dealing with, which is extremely powerful, wild, unpredictable, blissful but also profoundly disturbing, disorienting.

I play this part to ask you a little bit about the ways in which your spiritual beliefs enter into your work. (*The Hindu mystic*) Shree Ma sings a song on *Dead Bees* on *A Coke*, and the track "Krishna Blue" seems to make some reference to your spirituality. But otherwise, you seem to avoid such direct references or connections.

That album has a lot of references to direct experiences that I was lucky enough to participate in at that time in my life. I guess I felt it was a point in time when I could open up those gates and let come what needed to come through, which was more of a joyous celebration of the visceral states that I was experiencing, and also the trauma of letting go of certain aspects of the ego. The ego's going to hold on to the bitter end anyway; but there are aspects of it that are the first to go which can be profoundly painful experiences and traumatic experiences where there is an enormous sense of loss, loss of self, loss of identity, loss of the paraphernalia with which you clothe yourself to face the world. When that starts to dissipate, to fade, to crumble, you feel quite naked and quite vulnerable.

Shree Me came to stay in our home for a week and I had enormously profound experiences during those seven days. But when you feel that you've unlocked so many doors, you feel that, at some point, you're going to become accustomed to the vulnerability, to the sensitivity. But then you find that there are more profound and more frightening levels to deal with; and, as far as I'm concerned, it doesn't ever get easier. What drives you on is that the highs get higher and you can go to greater states of clarity, profundity, and just

out-and-out communion with the world in which you live. That's what drives me on, anyway, when I find myself rigid with fear, where I feel that I cannot move. Do you feel that your spirituality is always part of your work, whether it's direct or not?

Oh absolutely. It's all part of the journey. It can't fail to be a part of it, if you're trying to open up to yourself and really dig deep. After the *Dead Bees* album, Virgin didn't want a new album from me. They wanted compilation works, and it was stifling me. And when I finally got into this studio and I started creating work with my brother [Steve Jansen], I felt empty and dead inside. I didn't think there was anything there. It was really worrying. And then I tapped into this vein, when I started producing (*Blemish*), and it was so rich, but it was an enormously painful process as well [laughs], of standing naked and not being afraid of just letting come through what was coming through.

The new record is strikingly and beautifully experimental.

It's funny, when you're creating work, there's often a time when you feel you're at a point in your life where you have absolutely nothing to lose. And they are potentially very powerful moments in your creative life, because you throw caution to the wind. You just dive in and you say, "Anything, anything rather than what has gone before".

Alexander Davaikai

"EXCERPT FROM SHAMANIC HEALING RITUAL"

FROM *RAW VOICES* FROM THE CENTRE OF ASIA (GUTHRIE KIRKHAM FOLKWAYS 1995)

Is this [David] Toop's recording of the [Yanomami] shamans?

It is a shamanistic healing ritual.

Right. It's instantly recognisable as that. But I couldn't recognise the recording.

It's a Smithsonian record of Tuvan songs and voices.

Is the geographical location recognisable?

No, no. Not for me. But there's clearly some kind of hearing taking place. It's quite beautiful, isn't it? I'm very interested in the power of music to work on this level. My guru, Amma, she also sings. And Shree Ma is a beautiful singer. They choose to work through music to elevate the spirit. With them, music is pure light. That's in contrast to what we spoke about earlier, when I talked about trying to show the full spectrum of the human condition. The healing music that is produced by spiritual teachers tends to be just light, pure light. And only they could possibly create that work; only a being that is as high as that could manifest that energy and that spirit. It's the kind of music I only want to listen to live. I don't listen to it on record.

The record is just a document.

Exactly. Funny enough, the same can be said of certain free jazz players. Cecil Taylor comes to mind. His work on record baffled me; I couldn't get the point of it. When I went to see him live, initially there was the bafflement. But 30 minutes into the performance, there was a clarity. Like a bubble bursting, everything fell into place. It was like you were hearing the molecules bounce off one another. Suddenly the mind went and the heart opened up, and there was the experience. I went back the next night to see if the same thing would happen, and it did. I tried to gain the same experience through listening to his recorded work, and I never got it back. I think that must be of a similar, comparable spirit to sacred music, which has to be heard live.

There's so much "improvisation" out there that doesn't have that spirit, that doesn't have the possession of spirit in the performance. Coltrane had it. And that's why we're all still in wonderment when we listen to his work. But I wonder how many players, since that time, have really understood that.

FENNESZ

"ENDLESS SUMMER"

FROM *ENDLESS SUMMER* (MUSICA 2001)

Is it Christian [Fennesz]? Which album is it from?

It's the title track from *Endless Summer*.

I love that. It's so beautiful. That's the track that turned me onto his work. He sent me that originally to see if I was interested in doing something together. He said he was writing a new album and asked if I would contribute vocals to it. I said, "Sure, if you're willing to contribute something to mine".

What I liked about his work is that there's a meekness to it. It wasn't all sample manipulation. It really had a heart to it somewhere. I was talking to Ryuichi about two years ago and he said, "Do you still listen to music?" I said, "Well, I still tend to buy a lot of music and I listen to it for a fair amount of it. But I'm not touched by it. I'm not moved by it." He said, "Yeah, that's right. It's just a process of education. It's a means of finding out what is now possible with this or that technology. You're no longer listening to music; you're doing research." And what I liked about Christian's work is that there it all was: modern technology, but in the service of the heart. I always come back to the heart. There is a spark to the work that allows it to rise above others in this genre that are equally fascinating. I think of Oval and Pan Sorac. But I'm often left a little bit cold.

Even in Fennesz's noisiest work, it often seems as though there is a beautiful melody trying to surface. Funny enough, this track that I sent him, "Fire in the Forest", sat so far out of context with the rest of the album; it was overly melodic and overly sentimental. It was a lullaby for neurotics, and it needed to be made a little bit stranger, more disturbing, to balance out the sweetness of the melody and the simplicity of the lyrics. So I sent it to Christian precisely because I wanted him to screw with it [laughs]. He was struggling with it for awhile. I think he fell in love with the song and had trouble deconstructing it. He finally sent it back and said, "Well, it's still a lullaby for neurotics, but I hope you like what I've done." And I did.

I found working on *Balkads* trees that I really travelled a long way with a piece called "Weathered Wall". The arrangement of the piece was very open, very sparse. I found that the elements that Holger brought to the table – little samples from the Dictaphone that he was using at the time – were so much more profound in terms of accentuating the emotional content of the piece than any power chord you could come up with. Anger in pop music is often stereotypical. It's the stamping of the foot, the childlike response to that emotion. But to be able to allude to these frustrations, anger, and more destructive emotions that one feels in a far more suppressed manner in the work, as in life, was fascinating to me. It's the suppression that's fascinating. Once we suppress something as powerful as, say, desire or anger, it will manifest itself in so many other ways in one's life. Somehow, music in its formlessness can allude to it so much more readily than any of the other arts. Cinema comes close, and so does poetry. But music still has the upper hand.

Derek Bailey

"STELLA BY STARLIGHT"

FROM *BALKADS* (Tzadik 2002)

[Laughs as the sweet melody is suddenly sliced through by an angular chord] Well there's a giveaway! It's from *Balkads*, right? I love this record. It's beautiful, beautiful.

How did your collaboration with Derek Bailey come about?

I've been listening to Derek's work since 84 or 85. I was really drawn to the sound that he produced on the guitar. I'd seen him perform over the years and sort of just tapped into what he's been doing on and off. But

NEW WORLD RECORDS



00670-2

Selected Works 1961-1969

James Tenney

Reissue of Tenney's seminal computer music works originally released on Antlert Records



00904-2

Vespers and Other Early Works

Alvin Lucier

Passage of Lucier's classic electroacoustic works, including *Vespers*, *Chanters*, *North American Time Capsule*, and *Beggy for Albert Anastasia*



00668-2

Indian Sounds (Symphony No. 8)

Gloria Coates, soprano, Musica-viva ensemble
Dresden, Jürgen Wenzel, conductor

Gloria Coates

Soprano von Osten, soprano, Musica-viva ensemble
Dresden, Jürgen Wenzel, conductor

Works for voice and orchestra by one of contemporary music's truly original composers



00605-2

Pacific Sirens

Robert Erickson

Keith Humble, piano, Laura Martin, violin, Cleveland
Chamber Symphony, Edwin London, conductor

Four key works—White Lady, Garden, Piano
Concerto, Pacific Sirens—by the influential but
neglected West Coast composer

Distributed in the UK by:

Priory Records Ltd.

3 Edes Court, Eden Way, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4FY

(Tel) 01525 377566 (Fax) 01525 371477

E-mail: sales@priory.org.uk • www.priory.org.uk

New World Records

16 Penn Plaza, #835, New York, NY, 10001-1820

(Tel) 212-290-1680 (Fax) 212-290-1685

Email: info@newworldrecords.org

www.newworldrecords.org



odd nosdam - no more wig for ohio CD/2XLP

"...a spellbinding record, quite unclassifiable but never less than listenable, that confirms mr nosdam as a huge talent". - MUZIK

anticon records presents

the highly anticipated solo LPs from why? & odd nosdam
(2/3rds of world famous CLOUDDEAD).

and coming late summer/all fall from anticon:
dosh (drummer of log) st. instrumental debut CD/LP
muted (from the 1000 Islands) solo debut CD/LP
themselves - the no music of life, CD/2XLP remix record
sole - live from home ep CD/LP
alias - muted CD/2XLP

anticon presents: themselves, sole & sage francis

sunday june 16th at london @ scala
monday june 17th at the 1000 islands
@ king tut's wah wah hut
www.ticketweb.co.uk (08700 600 100)

more info @ www.anticon.com

why? - oaklandazulasyium

why?'s first official self-produced full-length release is dirty drum digital
dark folk catered to the raw sensibilities of hip hop in headphones.
"solo star in waiting". - MOJO



distributed in the US by midifever USA www.midifever.com
in Europe by Southern www.southern.net info@southern.net



it wasn't until I heard this album at this moment in my life that I felt, 'There it is. There's the opportunity that I was looking for back in 1990 with Keith [Tippett].'" I could finally see a way in.

Now, it's still not improvisation in the pure sense. We're not sitting in the room together performing. He recorded in London and sent the tapes to me here. I listened to the session one time and singled out a few pieces. And then, the second time I heard the pieces, I scribbled down lyrics and melody and then went for it on the third run-through. For me, that is improvisation. That's as close as I can come to it – especially as a lyricist. I have trouble with the whole soot vocalist thing. Forget it!

It seems to me that his playing really shaped your vocal lines.

Absolutely. It determined everything, everywhere I went melodically and emotionally. I had a notebook of fragments. Once I had selected a track that I felt held certain possibilities for me as a vocalist, I'd respond with an opening line, intuitively, and then I'd run with that. Then I'd grab snippets from the notebook and respond to those fragments, and flesh out the lyric within the first or second listen to the piece, improvising the melody based on what I was hearing. There are wonderful switches in dynamics in Derek's work, which isn't always true of my work. It was just a matter of finding my way into the piece, in the emotional heart of the music.

BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON

'JOHN THE REVELATOR'
FROM ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC
(SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS 18361949)

I have no idea.

It's Blind Willie Johnson, from the Harry Smith anthology. Your work doesn't generally have a bluesy feel, but a number of tracks on *Dead Bees On A Cake* reference the blues and other uniquely American musics.

It was mainly influenced by my wife, because that's a genre of music that she loves. I was initially writing material for her own project, for her to sing. I was leaning toward R&B because I thought that would really appeal to her. But she failed to make a connection with the material. And when it came time for me to write my album, I was feeling a connection with it. It was tapping into the American musical culture, to some degree. But I am no purist. I don't consider myself a musician that has 'roots' as such. You've been living in America now for more than a decade. Has living here changed your relationship to American music?

I was never drawn by American culture per se. Quite the reverse, in fact. I could go back to the time of punk and Patti Smith and Television – that was when I was immersed in the culture somewhat. But I lost the thread of it after that and my interests went further and further afield. What I found is that, during the decade that I've been living in the States, you could potentially be just about anywhere in the world. The internet changes everything in that respect. So, 'What is your immediate culture?' is the question now. I guess I embrace that fully. I don't think I could survive on a staple diet of American culture I'm sorry to say [laughs]. There are beautiful elements to it, and musically there's a lot going on. But a broader palette, a broader spectrum – you need that, I think.

My heart still belongs in Europe, and I find myself going back there more frequently now. And in the current political climate... I have a lot of friends that have left the country. There's something happening here that is enormously dangerous and quite oppressive. Maybe it's time to stand on that soapbox and put the word out, because there are becoming fewer and fewer options to speak out against what's going on. And it has to be said. □

VINYL

Vinyl For A Mad Mad World!



Television "The Blow-Up"
(Ex-LP: Blue/Green/Schrod)



Bill Laswell "Book Of Exit"
(Blue Vinyl)



Suicide "Half Alive"
(Blue Vinyl)



MCS "Babes In Arms"
(White Vinyl)

Also available on LP:
Bob Dylan "S/T" (Blue)
Bill Laswell "Book Of Exit" (Blue)
DJ Shadow "Endtroducing..." (Black)
Miguel "Bedroom Soundtrack" (Black)
MCS "Babes In Arms" (White)
Suicide "that Got Live..." (Pink)

ROR is distributed in the UK by Shelflife.
www.shelflife.com 01247 464663.

ROR



CLOGS

Lullaby for Sue



"Few CDs in any genre will do as much to challenge the way you listen to music." — *Philadelphia City Paper*

"Tense, looping folk melodies...delicately bowed and struck strings [and] beautiful 'lost at sea' effect." — *The Wire*

"What'd ya call yr contemporary disasual outfit with pretensions to be Satie, Stravinsky, Sigur Ros, and a more approachable Godspeed? Clogs Sweet?" — *Careless Talk Costs Lives*



THE NEW ALBUM FROM MIKE PARADAS

02 JUNE 2003

ON PLANET MU RECORDS

DOUBLE LP (210070) & CD (210070CD)

www.planet-mu.com

DISTRIBUTED BY S.S.D. (SOUTHERN SOUNDS)

DISTRIBUTED BY DUREC/ICON IN USA/CANADA

www.clog.com | CINEMA BIRCH BJC | www.goldenarts.com | BRIGHTON BJC | TAPPAHANEE RECORDS | www.brighton-cineplex.com | CAFE MONOGRAM | MONOGRAM | www.monogramrecords.com | THE COOP | www.thecoop.com | GOM T21 (LUXEM) | www.kayek.com | ID SESSION AMSTERDAM | www.idsession.com | playboy V.I.P. | SESSION | AMSTERDAM | www.critical.com | ID SESSION | L.A. QUINQUETTE | PARIS PARIS | www.parisparis.com | CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL | OXFORD BRUNO |



www.brasstland.org
www.clogmusic.com

Manufactured & distributed in Europe by Southern
www.southernsound.com | info@southern.net



ALWAYS SEARCHING FOR A KEY

The realisation that she was black in a country run by whites, a woman in a world run by men, turned Nina Simone into the voice of a revolution. Ian Penman pays tribute to a singer whose multifaceted song distilled the concentrated essence of hope

Gill Scott-Heron said she was black before it was fashionable to be black. H Rap Brown said she was the singer of the black revolution. These are heavy weights to carry, as well as loving tributes, and perhaps it is no surprise that today such words are scarcely unfashionable, verbotten; you're not black, you're Urban; our role models aspire to 'top-down' consumer penetration, not revolutionary ire.

She was born Eunice Waymon and raised in a small North Carolina town, and later said she never noticed much prejudice when she was growing up there; some of the town's white citizens even helped to pay for this obviously gifted child's musical education. The miss-education of little Eunice (and the first of her battles against all the white eunuchs) duly arrived, when at an early recital some anonymous white family sought to force her mother and father from their front row seats. Still only 11, Eunice (or perhaps Nina, already) spoke up to say she wouldn't perform unless her parents remained in place.

Audience members laughed and jeered at this

reasonable demand.

Simone later said she felt as if she had been (note the word) raped.

To these ears, the use of the word 'diva' to pigeonhole her later in her career was just one more attempt – no matter how well intentioned – to pretend her skin wasn't there, made no difference, fell away somehow the moment she took to a stage. To pretend there was no pain, no politics; to peer and laugh one more time at... funny Nina, wonky Nina, obstreperous Nina, Nina with the outside dreams...

She found that her fingers thought naturally along classical lines, and wanted to become the first black concert pianist. But after a year's scholarship at Juilliard, she was turned down by the major colleges – edged out with the unspoken sign-off, "You must agree this is better for both of us." Juilliard proved predictably unpleasant – she found the same racism there as in other establishment outposts. Not merely backwoods racism – but a broader agenda, set on

pinning her down to some manageable essence. Blues is your place, not black. The existential backwash blues.

She didn't take this lying down, so got a reputation for being 'difficult', which was just one more way of identifying (and demoting) someone who had no compunction about voicing a grievance. (Cecil Taylor – 'difficult', Ishmael Reed – 'difficult'. Even Louryn Hill – 'difficult'.) Someone who won't wait for the Other to answer in their place.

She said: "Music was a gift and a burden I've had since I can remember who I was." How much of her life was a Being – terribly caught and managed, daily anticipated and mightily discarded – on stage? It becomes easier to understand her 'tantrums' or the difficulty she often found with 'performing' if you remember that every stage was perhaps haunted by the spectres of that first recital. The stage became a mirror become a cage become a jeering mob. At any moment kindness can turn into cruelty and dension, your being can be repossessed. You cannot mould the



simpler of dreams, and futures, because they rely on the dilatory beneficence of the Other.

In the late 50s she relocated to New York City. She had her head turned, her worst fears articulated and her waking dreams shaped by meetings with remarkable men and women like Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, Stokely Carmichael and playwright Lorraine Hansberry. Texts from Franz Fanon, Camus and, later, Angela Davis. She said she started to see herself as a black person in a country run by white people and as a woman in a world run by men...

Singing, you don't really SEE yourself as such, you see either the audience or an abyssal darkness of eyes shut tight and let the hoover take you under or a whisper take you out onto the waiting WAVES there in the blue behind your eyes in the sea line at the edge of your mind it is safer there when you sing and when you inhabit these songs you know they don't know what to make of your voice, never cutie gospel or blues or easy swallow supper jazz or easy access carnality, no; these tones are not so easily found or named, maybe it is something called freedom, not so easily held and sustained, its cast like sand or breeze or flame, so your voice is sometimes elsewhere as if you yourself don't know where it will stop next, sometimes downtown rowdy, sometimes delicate as beforeys... And always, always, the womb of mourning.

Each morning, it sometimes seems, mourning anew: for Medgar Evers, for those four little black girls in Alabama blown apart in church by white "Christians". Malcolm X in 1965, Martin Luther King in 1968. George Jackson in 1971. America's answer to every difficult question: a bullet, and a target, and blood. She took to calling her "homeland" the United Snakes of America.

She said: "They are killing us one by one."

She said her vibraphone masterpiece "Mississippi Goddam" was "a showtime for a show that hasn't been written yet".

She sang: "I WISH I KNEW HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE FREE."

She showed how free she was by performing in Mississippi, defying the death threats she now received as a matter of course. (Oh, land of the free and home of the brave!) Nine sing, and the FBI listened; she was now being monitored, spied upon. Miss Simone withheld taxes from her warlike government; Nina fought for musicians' rights. The Last Poets sang, "I am the wish that makes Nina Simone wish she knew how it felt to be free." But the fight was increasingly difficult: inflation, betrayal, sectarianism, assassination, CONTELPRO, prison sentences, Nixon.

With ever more to mourn, she began to see even her black audiences as species of defeat, sellout, no future. She stalled, fell silent, withdrew. Songs burned in her throat. She began a long night of silence/exile/closedness in Barbados, Liberia, London, Amsterdam and then finally France.

She still performed, but ever ahead of her time, people weren't quite ready for the sooty blues. There were subtle attempts, too much drinking, financial miss-management, ratfink lovers: the full catastrophe. And maybe in later life she was a honor to be around, but I'm not sure I even want to know about all that, that I want to be a zoo gawker at her pain and dismay wa peep-through-the-bars journalism, or what the point in knowing all this off-days stuff might really be. Easy enough to paint her a diva gone to seed, winking bottles of Baileys for breakfast. Harder to plumb the pain and perplexity that lie behind such desperate measures. (Memories of lynchings; justifiable paranoid anxiety about surveillance and persecution and friends who've sold you out; the hurt of permanent exile.) You surely don't need much

delicacy or sympathy or nous to work out she maybe found herself in some pretty vicious circles. The catch-22 being: she has been ripped off – clearly she sees "My Baby Just Cares For Me" clocking up millions (and it was precisely a series of hard nosed Babes who ripped her off and defrauded her) – she is broke and she needs money so she needs to be the Performing Geek and do interviews (which she hates) one more time... and so maybe she turns the hatred and fear against herself and the interviewer duly gets the Muth Mouthed Nina they wanted... and one more layer of skin is gone... and on goes the vicious circle...

One more thing to mourn. Stolen monies, desecrated innocence, incinerated dreams.

Singing, she remembers the dreams, reclaims some dignity. Sober, the daylight offends her eyes and remembrance has the sound of opening bomb hatches and what for latocomers are delights ("Even Lona Turner's smile is something he can't see") remain for her mnemonic daggers, reminders of rip-off and irrevocable loss, her own self-destructive armeness and ardour and spite.

She was called "diva", which was maybe just one more way of not listening to what she had to say. She was called diva as I don't doubt she was called many other names (which shadowed and stereotyped her) over the course of her long and thorny and perplexing life. She was queen, not diva, Euzelle. The woman in the red dress. Nefertiti. Orpheus & Eurydice in one "night on" chorus. "Nina Simone" was, after all, only a stage name, not her real self, and in later life she seemed often to decide to be this or that. "Nina" for a while – a recognisable black survival tactic detourned against sneaky promoters, easy audiences and know-nothing hacks. The latter would compare her to Billie Holiday (another staged name) because well, because they were both BLACK! And sing! Whereas, in real terms (of actual learned conservatory skills of phrasing and form) her flexibly muscular voice was nearer – as she claimed – to Maria Callas than Billie's sanguously, sinfully sultry jazz.

And in every song or choice of song there seems to come a moment when she and the lyrics coincide, and often you may not even notice it but you can be sure she did. In Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne": "And you know that she's half-crazy/And that's why you want to be there", in "Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood": "Sometimes I think I'll spend the rest of my life/Regarding some simple thing I've done/But I'm just a soul whose intentions are good..."

She could sing the loneliest song in the world (her reading of The Gibb Brothers' "Please Read Me") as a sort of consolation to Alex Chilton's "Holocaust"; or the angriest ("Mr Backlash" – do you think all black people are second class fools? Mr Backlash – I'm gonna leave you with the blues"), or almost maddily joyful (the awesome transformation of "Suzanne" from merrun dirge into high-life halleluja! sunrise). She was (rightly) acclaimed as live performer; but her skills as interpreter/arranger are as yet still vastly underrated.

I used to listen (through a glass, darkly) to her take on songs like "Little Girl Blue" and "Read Me" and think this was the saddest sound in the world, but listening to it now, in different times, it sounds like concentrated essence of HOPE to me.

And finally it is that hope that she leaves us – and that you should remember as you pick through the dodgy riddles and "unofficial" live sets and dubious Best Of's and rediscover her music for the ages on sublime recordings like "I Loves You Porgy" and "Mississippi Goddam" and "Nuff Said" (1968) and "Baltimore" (1976) and others, for her song gives us so many places to LIVE, even as she couldn't find a home in this world she felt she could call her home.

Maybe she's found one now. □ Nina Simone, singer, pianist, composer, 23 February 1933-21 April 2003

Queen in a stone cold age: Nina Simone



PHOTO: RICHARD



CLUB OF CHAOS

Forced into activism in the late 70s by repressive housing policies in Amsterdam, Dutch freedom fighters **The Ex** have spent more than two decades agitating for change by yoking their anarchic punk scrawl to free improvisors such as Han Bennink and The ICP Orchestra, as well as crosstalk with avant rockers such as Sonic Youth and Tortoise. Dan Warburton hears how the group have evolved into a tight-knit family that's reached celebrity status in Ethiopia.

Photos: Frank Bauer



Once seen, a live performance by Dutch anarchist punks The Ex is never forgotten. Imagine two men in short pants and army boots, guitars slung, singing very low, careering round the stage like demented dodgem cars, backed by a veritable arsenal of precision-honed polyrhythms that surely can't be coming from the slim women at the drums, while upfront, the singer, earnest and unsmiling, claps the mic like it was a megaphone and declaims his texts with sarcastic fury. The Ex's noise was once described as "peeing all over a wall of sound," but as generic terms go, "punk" is far too context-specific to describe the music of a group that has pushed the envelope outwards to include traditional Eastern European and African folk forms, and whose collaborations with free improvising musicians even predate those of a pioneering group such as Sonic Youth.

Amazingly, The Ex have been doing this for a quarter of a century. In 1979, in Wormer, a town on the outskirts of Amsterdam, GW Sok (b/s Jos Kleij) and Terme Ex (b/s Hessela) were swept along like thousands of others on a wave of punk enthusiasm. "We were at the same junior high school and kept on seeing each other at gigs," recalls GW Sok, sipping hot coffee in guitarist Andy Moor's spacious studio flat, a converted schoolroom in a quiet Amsterdam side street. "The Clash in '77, Siouxsie And The Banshees, Gang Of Four, Wire, everyone!" Terme injects enthusiastically. Infected by original punk's DIY spirit, they formed their own group, flipping a coin to determine who did what. GW Sok ended up as the singer, despite having been "rejected even by the school choir", and Terme got to play guitar, even though he had never even held one before. For a name they settled on The Ex because it could be sprayed quickly on walls; plus, Sok wrote all his lyrics in English. "Dutch rock sounds like a contradiction in terms somehow," he smiles. With a couple of friends on bass and drums, they signed up to play at a local punk festival, at which point they realized they had better start practising for real.

Within a year The Ex released their debut EP, *All Corpses Smell The Same* - "Pressed 500, sold 'em off," beams Terme - and album, *Disturbing Domestic Peace*, produced by Dolf Koenenverhaar, who has worked with the group ever since. Two years later, they followed up with another volley of angry scatals, *History Is What Happening* (1982), which fired off 20 songs in just over half an hour inside a sleeve contrasting punchy cartoon artwork and a cover photo depicting punks playing music in a concentration camp. Although the raw mix, scratchy guitars and skewed Mockney accents of these early records sound charmingly dated today, the originality of Sok's lyrics is already evident in the way they voiced The Ex's unswerving dedication to anarchist causes.

Despite its enduring reputation as something of a liberal hippy paradise with enlightened attitudes towards drugs and sex, Amsterdam back in the late 1970s had more than its fair share of social injustice. Sok explains: "When Terme and I moved to the city as students in 1978, the housing situation in cities was bad, rent was sky-high and so was unemployment. But there were plenty of buildings kept empty by their owners purely for speculation's sake. Since neither national nor local government were doing anything about it, we got angry and decided to do something about it ourselves." In Wormer, the police operated a particularly heavy-handed policy against disaffected youth - not exclusively punks, Sok hastens to add - squatting disused factory premises. With their punk revolutionary zeal not about to be contained within hometown limits, The Ex laid into police brutality, among other social injustices, at home and abroad. They released a single, "Weapons For El Salvador", and appeared with 11 other local groups

on the *Corporation* compilation album, a landmark release for Dutch punk.

Within a tightly knit community of artists, activists and squatters based in Wormer, The Ex evolved a global political outlook indexed to conditions at home, epitomized by a fiercely independent attitude to record production and distribution that continues to this day. "We live on the minimum and that's why we can do what we do," explains Terme Hessela. "We have no middleman, no managers and no record companies. We can keep all the buck catalogue in print and sell CDs quite cheaply. But income is still related to the number of people who come to gigs and the number of discs we sell." Though the arts in The Netherlands are generously funded, the Ex have scrupulously denied themselves the benefits of playing along with the system. "If we did, we'd get lazy," argues GW Sok. "You need a challenge to make your music." The Ex's principles permeate every level of their music and the business of selling it. In 1988, for instance, they released an album, *Aural Guernica*, inside artwork designed to be cut out and folded into cassette box sleeve cards. In defiance of the music industry's "Home Taping Is Killing Music" campaign, the sleeve was emblazoned with the text, "Home Taping Still Saves Money!" "People do it anyway," shrugs GW Sok. "When I have tapes of records I really like, I go and buy the real thing," he adds matter-of-factly.

Ex music is as much about information as entertainment. 1987's *Too Many Cowboys* comes with a 36 page booklet featuring articles on diverse subjects close to the group's heart, including Nicaragua, the Animal Liberation Front, the confiscation of Navajo and Hopi lands by the US Government, and the vibrant pirate radio and indie scene in Holland's squat zones. However, the most impressive document in this respect remains the beautifully realised 144-page book of texts and archive photographs accompanying the double 7" 1936 (now reissued in 3" CD format) released in 1986 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War. The discs included The Ex's stirring renditions of the revolutionary songs "El tren Blindado", "Ay Camelia" and the magnificent raw cry of freedom of "They Shall Not Pass".

With their internationalist outlook, The Ex soon locked into an emerging global network of like-minded anarchists and activists. During one of their UK visits in the 1980s, they played in a factory squatted by anarchists who became the group's compatriots Chumbawamba. At the height of the ill-fated UK miners' strike in 1984, they toured Holland raising money for strikers' families, and invited miners' children over to Wormer for a holiday. "They'd never seen macaroni before," smiles Terme. They also struck up a solid friendship with The Mekons, particularly Jon Langford, whom they brought over to The Netherlands to produce 1983's *Tumult*. The record's improved sound quality, plus the power drumming of new recruit Svenn Wittenberg, mark *Tumult* out as a landmark Ex release. From the opening motorik No Wave-meets-Neuf "Bouquet Of Barbed Wire" to the desecrating wiry scratches of Terme's guitar on "Island Race", it's clear the group were already looking beyond the confines of the straight binary punk single format.

For their tours, meanwhile, Terme bought and converted a bright red engine, memories of which trigger a wave of hilarity through the assembled company. "I think we were the only colour in Poland," smiles GW Sok wryly, recalling their mid-80s foray into Eastern Europe. "And in Luxembourg once we drove past a real fire and everyone looked at us as if to say, 'Why don't they come to help?' Eventually our gearbox broke, and it wouldn't go any faster than 30mph. I remember when we followed the sunset driving back home from Germany. For hour upon hour we could see

the sun going down. It was beautiful."

The quintessential Ex sound began to take shape with the arrival of bassist Luc Klaasen in 1984. "I wasn't completely into punk," remembers Luc, who left The Ex last year, "but Terme blew me away. I was a taxi driver at the time, and one day my cab crossed paths with Terme's van. I wound my window down to tell him how much I enjoyed the new album. Two weeks later I was in the band."

With Svenn's departure for France in late 1984, the group set about finding another female drummer. "We liked the idea of it being mixed, not just a boy's thing," says GW Sok. Germen-born Kathenna (Kat) Somfelder, who used to drum in an allgirl punk trio Die Dre, Musketiere who also featured her mother, was in Amsterdam when Terme took her number and invited her to join a week later.

With Kat's extraordinary energy and fondness for cowbells, the unmistakable Ex sound was complete. The group's working methods have changed little since, and they're at pains to stress that there's no mystique involved. "Terme or I could bring in a line and Kat would put a drum pattern on top, or vice versa," recalls Luc. "Lyrics always came last." Andy Moor, a guitarist from London who would end up joining the group later, still considers 1985's *Polkhereme* as his favourite Ex album. "It's really raw, the pure version of The Ex, just the quartet: Jos, Terme, Luc and Kat." Sok's sprawling rants about what's in names and thingamajigs on "Nurse" often recall Mark E Smith, and *Polkhereme* is up there with The Fall's *This Nation's Saving Grace* as one of the toughest albums of a rough year.

Though *Polkhereme* is punk in its rawest form, the previous year's *Blueprints* For A Blackout, recorded shortly after Luc's arrival, was also a milestone in terms of its opened-up approach to song form and its odd instrumentation, which includes violin, cello, beer crates and oil drums. Flitting between several styles, including dub, it opened up a whole series of avenues for potential exploration, most notably an interest in free improvisation that has continued ever since.

"Many of the songs on *Blueprints* were made up on the spot in the studio," recalls GW Sok, while Terme dates the group's interest in Improv back to 1983's four single box *Dignity/D Labour*, documenting the rise and fall of a paper mill in Wormer. "We learnt how the factory had been bled dry by the new management," recalls Sok. "How they'd used asbestos despite the health risk, the plans to close it down, the protests, the closure. We wanted to reflect this, with lyrics culled from interviews we'd done with people who used to work there, and music largely improvised and structured on the spot. We even sneaked into the factory with equipment to play everything there and record an extra track for the environmental protest revert."

Before he joined The Ex, Luc was already acquainted with the legendary wild man of Dutch Improv, Hen Benink. "He gave us this percussion workshop where he turned up with a little big full of matchboxes, and he gave us each a box to play with," smiles Luc. "Dead night - if you can't make music with whatever you have to hand, don't bother." In recent years, Benink has often played with the group, sitting in for Kat when she took time out to have a second child in 1997, and later accompanying them on their recent tour to Ethiopia.

Strong links have also been forged with members of The Instant Composers Pool (ICP), the ramshackle collective of improvisers originally formed by Benink, pianist Maata Mengelberg and vibraphonist Willem Breuker in 1967. ICP began in response to the difficulties young Dutch free musicians encountered when trying to promote their music, and its founder members were as deeply involved in the politics



The Ex in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, April 1993 (from top): Katharina Ex, Terri Ex and Andy Moor, Rosmarie Ex and GW Sok

surrounding music as they were in their own work. Proceeds from each ICP release were remastered in the next project. Mengelberg and Bennink (Brenkert left in 1973) presiding over a loose, seemingly chaotic, collective structure whose independent, experimental spirit has served as a model for subsequent generations of Dutch musicians, including The Ex. ICP saxophonist Ab Beers and trombonist Wolter Wierbos contributed to The Ex's *Juggers And Smugglers* (1989), which GW Sok describes as "a conscious attempt to incorporate free improvisation into The Ex's approach... We read that Wolter wanted to play with The Mekons," he continues, "so we thought we'd look him up." Beers and Wierbos also play on *Instanta*, The Ex's 1995 double CD of instrumental improvisations also featuring madcap cellist Tristan Honsinger and percussionist Michael Wölker. This eclectic selection of vignettes features sampled piedpipers, biscuit tins, seashells and African djembe, but in a conscious attempt to work within the track time constraints of a rock album – only one of the 32 tracks goes over the four minute mark.

Juggers charts the history of another Amsterdam squat, the ADM complex, where the group's Koninklijkstuin studio and practice room were located until they were unceremoniously evicted. "We went somewhere else and built another one until we were evicted again," says Terri. "We did a lot of building." Sok's texts reference a wide range of literary sources, from Franz Kafka to Jacques Prévert via Bertolt Brecht, but still nem the social message home: "Here too troops get sent in against the home population, as easily as anywhere else. Tanks in the street, we know them too. Amsterdam 1980 (Vondelstraat) and Nijmegen 1981 (Personenstraat), remember?" The inclusion of recordings of ADM's sound environment – playgrounds, traffic, barrel organs – serve to locate the record in time and place. "I saw a piece by [German-era expressionist painter] Georg Grosz, an article where he described cycling through Berlin, and I transposed that to Amsterdam," comments GW Sok, about one of the album's inspirations. Among the 19 musicians guesting on the album were Lee Ranaldo and Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth. "We met Sonic Youth in 1984 when they were touring Europe supporting P.I.L.," recalls Terri. "A friend called and asked if I could put them up, as they had no money for a hotel." The two groups' explorations of the fertile territory between punk and improv have been crossing over since, most recently on last year's *In The Fishtank CD*, a three-way collaboration between The Ex, Sonic Youth and ICP.

A year before *Juggers*, with Nicolette Schuurman on second guitar, The Ex, once more produced by Langford, recorded *Asrai Guerrilla* at Suite Sixteen (formerly Cargo) studios in Rochdale, Lancashire. "We went there because The Fall recorded there," explains GW Sok. At a time when local groups down the road in Madchester were getting themselves sorted and riding the first waves of Acid House, the raw pure power of the *Asrai Guerrilla* tracks must have appeared rather odd to the old studio hands, but the album still packs an awesome punch, from the opening "Headache By Numbers", with its waffler of stock market statistics spout out with rage by Sok, to the inspired reworking of Peter Hammill's lyrics on "A Motorbike In Africa", Luc and Kat handle the complex metrics of "Welcome To The Asylum" with consummate ease, laying down a rock solid foundation on top of which Terri's screamer guitar and Sok's hyperkinetic harmonica go ballistic.

Andy Moor remembers seeing The Ex live for the first time in Sheffield in 1988, where Terri's insensc cavorting about actually made a hole in the stage. "I didn't know much about music until I went to

university in the early 1980s, where I met a guitarist called Colin McLean," he recalls. "He had an enormous collection of jazz records. I remember he asked me if I'd heard Ornette Coleman and I answered, 'Erm, she's supposed to be really good!' He lent me about 150 LPs that summer and that changed everything." When Moor joined McLean, Manon Coutts, Wilf Plum, Kathy Hume and Ruth Robinson in a collective called Ventriloquists Slavery (they were all big Roland Kirk fans), he enlisted a UK anarchist/squat scene that included The Ex's old friends Chumbawumba. When Hume and Robinson left, the group evolved into Dog Faced Hermans. Andy says, "We taught ourselves how to play, organise gigs, release records, set up tours and write songs based on improvisations in rehearsal, in much the same way The Ex's are. Our influences came from all over: Sonic Youth, The Conformists, Don Cherry, ska and African music from Burundi and Nigeria [where Coutts was born], our biggest musical influences were each other. For me that still applies – the musicians I've played with are those I've learnt the most from."

"We were pretty much ignored by the press and radio, with the exception of John Peel who gave us a session, but we never felt bitter because we'd built up our own self-sustaining network. Manon's lyrics were fantastic, a bizarre mixture of personal, political, sexual and sometimes incomprehensible ramblings." Moor is still in touch with Coutts, now working as a video artist in London, and has provided music for two of her recent installations.

When Dog Faced Hermans moved to Holland in the early 90s and took a year off, Andy hooked up with The Ex for a tour of Russia. On the road the group was listening to a lot of Eastern European and African music ("You can't listen to punk all the time," smiles Jos), beginning to tap into a rich vein of folk and ethnic music that would surface in their music in the decade to come, especially after their encounter with cellist Tom Cora in 1989 (see *The Wire* 230).

"Tom had come to see us at CBGBs in 1989, where they only let you stay for 50 minutes before they turn the PA off. He went and argued with them until they turned it back on," Terri recalls fondly. 1991's *Scratching At The Lock* with Cora remains the bestselling Ex album. The tight, irregular metrics of Balkan folk are powerfully forward by Luc and Kat, while Cora's extraordinary melodic virtuosity is paralleled in Kat's singing, notably on the Hungarian folksong "Hüsgen Fujnak A Székely". Cora's wife Catherine Jauniaux also adds her spectacular vocal improvisations on several tracks.

Touring extensively with Cora over the next three years (a second album with the cellist, *And The Weathermen Shrug Their Shoulders*, came out in 1993) introduced The Ex's work to a public more familiar with the refined worlds of jazz and improvisation. About this time the group members started using "Ex" as their surnames. Had they turned into a sort of some sort? "No, it was just that when we played jazz festivals everyone had full names and we didn't!" recalls Kat.

Discovering that their unorthodox guitar work was received enthusiastically by promoters, musicians and this new audience, Terri and Andy, who joined The Ex full time in 1994, started working as an improvising duet, adding extra players whenever possible. Their appearance with Henk Bennink, Horst Drake and Ken Vandermark at 2003's Unlimited Festival in Wels is slated for release soon. Meanwhile, Terri launched his own Terp imprint in 2000 with a pair of rough and tumble duets, *Hur* with Ab Beers and *The Laughing Owl* with Henk Bennink, and more recently has released *Fleets* with new Ex bassist Rozemarie Hogen. Meanwhile, Luc's investigations into improv continued with the group Roof, formed in

1998: "I wanted to continue playing with Tom [Corra], and he suggested adding Phil Minton, so I proposed Michael Vatcher." After Corra's death, pianist Vernon Weston stepped into the breach - "One of the most underappreciated musicians in the world," Luc enthuses - and the group became 4 Walls. In 2000 Andy recorded Locks, with Kaffe Matthews on laptop, for the Unsounds imprint he runs with Yannis Kyriakides, and has just released Thermal with saxophonist John Butcher and analog synth whiz Thomas Lehn. "I was offered a gig in Brussels and asked to choose who I wanted to play with - I ultimately thought of John. The concert promoter chose Thomas, whose work I didn't know at the time. But it worked very well."

Thermal is one of the most thrilling Improv outings released so far this year. Moor, like Some Youth's Thurston Moore, approaches the guitar from an oblique angle, avoiding the stylings of a Derek Bailey or a John Russell - both ultimately rooted in jazz - and his background in hard driving rock means he has no qualms about laying down the odd motorik riff, drawing Butcher and Lehn into a veritable electrical storm of hard blowing blurs, zaps and fizzes. Andy and Terme's boisterous no-nonsense attitude is a welcome shot in the arm to European Improv at a time when it threatens to atrophy into various little cliques each with its own dogmatic agenda, and recalls the arrival in the late 1970s of improvisers from a rock background such as Fred Frith, which opened the floodgates to a rich spate of activity in the subsequent decade.

Improv is just one of many paths the group and its individual members have explored. In 1995, after touring with Jaap Blonk's Braatzaal, they invited Schmatzines vocalist Han Buhrs to bring his gruff Beethovenian growl to bear on 1995's Mudcrab Shavers, which also includes a memorable reading of "House Carpenter", a song that featured on the Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music sung by Clarence Ashley in 1930.

Individual group members were being increasingly drawn to ever more disparate styles of playing. Kat met Czech violinist Iva Bittová (they toured as a duo last year), Soko hooked up with a punk-folk group called De Kith, and Andy teamed up with Estonian guitarist Leonid Sepperman, and The Necks rhythmic section Joe Williamson and Tony Buck to form the Klezmer/noise outfit Kleika Red, whose highly acclaimed debut Hacking was released on John Zorn's Tzadik label. "I met Leonid and his group No Dzhali when The Ex toured Russia in 1990. It was great fun playing fucked-up electric guitar versions of old Eastern European folk and klezmer, very fresh and chaotic. Later we introduced some Greek rembetika songs and Leonid sang more in Russian. We would have played more often, if we hadn't all been busy with our other bands," he sighs.

Meanwhile, Terme and his girlfriend were on a trip round Africa that took up most of 1998. In a fire engine? "No, an ambulance" he roars. "We drove down the west side and up the east side." Particularly impressed with Ethiopia, he took advantage of his visit to prepare the ground for The Ex's tour of the country six years later.

Though their interest in non-European culture can be dated back to a split "7" in 1974 with the Iraqi Kurdish group Awas, recent years have seen an explosion of Ex collaborations with, among others, Japanese dancer Hisako Horikawa, Senegalese conga player Serigne and the Congolese group Konono. Terme discovered Ethiopian singer Tesfayohu Bereki living in Rotterdam, penniless and depressed. "She was a big real star in the 1970s, but she only released a few 7"s. I built her a war [five-string harp], and put her in contact with the guy who released Ethiopiques

Volume 5, on which Bereki features." A double CD of her music is due out shortly on Terp.

In January 2002 The Ex embarked on the long-awaited trip to Ethiopia, a voyage of discovery lovingly documented on their Website. "We had a paper typed out showing we could play anywhere we wanted and we showed it to the Chief of Police in each village," Andy explains. Of their eight concerts, each of which features four songs in Amharic sung by Kat (on which Ben Hennink squared the drum stool), the most memorable was in Bahir Dar. After driving around all afternoon announcing the gig by megaphone, they were dismayed to find they'd only sold five tickets (at £1 each). Postponing the concert until the next day, they played in the square in front of the theatre... to 5000 estate Ethiopians (another free gig in Gondar a couple of days later drew a huge crowd). By the time they left the country, "State of Shock", Scrabbling At The Lock's opening track and the closest the group have come to a bona fide hit record, was blasting out of local Tej-Bets (honeymoon bars). Not surprisingly, the group intend to return to the region (Entrepreneur this year, Ethiopia in early 2004).

Recording remains a priority for the group, and when an opportunity presented itself to work in Steve Alm's Electrical Audio in Chicago, they seized it. Alm is an Ex fan of long standing; he once cited their 1983 "7" *Gonna Rob The Spankbank* as an all-time favourite, and even helped them carry their gear on stage at that CBGBs gig in 1989. Nine years later, installed in his custom-built studio, the group took full advantage of the situation to produce one of their finest albums to date, *Starters Alternators*. A second Alm-produced album, *Dizzy Spells*, was recorded in France in 2000.

"Steve doesn't like being called a producer," Moor continues. "He hardly uses any effects. Most of the work is in the recording. He insisted that the walls of one room at Electrical Audio be made out of sun-dried adobe brick, for perfect acoustics. I remember once I must have nudged the mic about three inches and he came downstairs to move it back. I thought, 'How did he know it had moved?'"

"He does the EQing by using different microphones," adds Terme. "We recorded Starters in five days, with only two days mixing." "He's working day and night," says Kat. "Alm and his group Shellec did, however, take time off to play The Ex's 20th anniversary bash in Amsterdam's Paradiso a year later.

Returning to the States in 1999, The Ex played seven shows with Fugazi and released their first *In The Flakstan* collaboration on Konkurrent, which partnered them with Tortoise. On paper, a meeting between the Chicago group's pallidian chamber rock and The Ex's jagged avant-punk would seem to be fraught with problems, but after two days of experimenting in the studio, their sheer incompatibility threw up some extraordinary music, notably "Central Heating", which sounds like late 50s Miles jamming with Barberousse. A further US trip in 2001 was aborted when The Ex's plane turned round halfway across the Atlantic. It was 11 September. "We were flying to Texas when that happened," recalls Andy. "I remember Terme waking me up and saying: 'We're going back home...'"

In 2000, The Ex was invited by the Holland Festival to produce a work for 20 people big band, The Ex Orkestar. "We were originally invited to play in Zappa's 2000 Models, but we got out of that," recalls Andy. Instead, the group, with some help from Joost Baas, arranged choice morsels from The Ex back catalogue, as well as an extraordinary version of Alexander Mossolov's 1926 orchestral constructivist noise masterpiece, *The Iron Foundry*. The resulting album, *Een Ronde Holland*, features assorted Ex alumni

including Blonk, Buhrs, Werbos and Vatcher. What started as a one-off project has ended up as a touring outfit, perhaps the only regularly working large ensemble in Europe to integrate free improvisation within a rock framework. Parallels might again be drawn with The ICP Orchestra, but whereas their seemingly chaotic proceedings are curiously idiosyncratic, the music is more structured and firmly rooted in jazz, an Ex Orkestar performance requires extensive rehearsals and organisation. "If you're working with strong characters, you need discipline to get the music out," explains Luc. "Freedom should be within limits."

Luc's decision to leave the collective last year threw the musicians into an intense period of soul-searching. "We talked about it for eight months," sighs Terme. "For me it's still mysterious. He never said what he wanted to do." Luc explains patiently later: "When you leave a band it's taken as being critical of the band, but it's not that - I just had several reasons for feeling I couldn't go on any further." Not that all ties have been definitively severed - his office at Konkurrent is directly under Andy's studio, and the two have recently performed together with Michael Vatcher and Senegalese singer Mola Syle in Groningen. He's also busy touring with 4 Walls... and building four walls himself. "I'm building my own house, because I don't have enough money to pay anyone else to do it," he explains, adding with a grin: "But I like doing it too."

Fortunately a new bassist was at hand, in the form of Roeszanne Heggen, a classically trained New Music virtuoso who had played in The Ex Orient and jumped at the chance of leaving a secure chair in the prestigious Nieuw Ensemble to board The Ex's tourbus. In a baptism of fire typical of The Ex, her first gig found her jamming along with Congolese musicians Konono. Terme recalls: "Back in Congo they usually play ten hours in a row, building up gradually. So we played first. Mingaud, their 70 year old leader, thought we were playing traditional Dutch music. In the end we overcame. We tried to play a Konono song, and they joined in ours. Mingaud was singing all our songs in the van driving back after the gig! Of course, we had no in-depth knowledge of the traditions behind their music, but it sounded great."

"I was attracted to the idea of playing with The Ex because I knew I would be free as a bird," confirms Roeszanne by email (she was in fact, in Ethiopia when the interview took place). "Playing punk on an acoustic basis is a challenge; it has to be loud and sound good. I like to use the bow a lot, so I've tried out lots of pick-ups and preamps." No question of her having to compete with Luc by learning the old repertoire either. As Jos explains: "Every time somebody new joins, we start from scratch again." In the last two and half months the group has rehearsed his new set no fewer than 46 times. "It's a completely new band," says Terme, enthusiastically as ever. "I often wonder where else I could find such freedom and friendship," adds Kat.

Did Terme and Jos ever imagine back in 1979 that they would still be together a quarter of a century later? "I'm surprised, considering how I thought in 1979," Jos replies, calmly. "You couldn't imagine a band lasting so long. Of course, I find it painful every time a new war starts that we haven't learnt anything from the past. But good things are happening locally, if you're a decent, friendly person it affects people in the end. That works better than a big pile of paper with lots of signatures. There's always a new project. Every tour, every record is new. You never look back." □

Andy Moor's *Thermal* with John Butcher and Thomas Lehn is available now on Unsounds (www.unsounds.com). Information on The Ex catalogue is on their Website: www.theex.nl

**mutable
MUSIC**

"A label that challenges the expectations
and conceptions of improvisation"
—Andy Hamilton, *The Wire*

alone, together, apart.



**Jerome Cooper /
Thomas Buckner**

Alone, Together, Apart

"From an opening of sporadic
gestures, a powerful
keening lament emerges..."

—Andy Hamilton, *The Wire*



**Earl Howard
Strong Force**

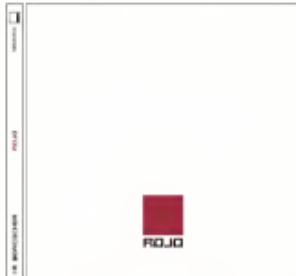
Parabola Arts Ensemble: Anthony Davis, piano; Gerry Henshaw, percussion; Earl Howard, synthesizer;
Anne LeBaron, harp; Ernst Reijseger, cello

**J. B. Floyd
Transporting Transmittance**
J. B. Floyd, piano;
Thomas Buckner, baritone;
Lisa Hansen, flute

To Order, Contact

mutable music

109 West 27th St., 7th floor, New York, NY 10001 www.mutablemusic.com
Phone 212 627 0960 • Fax 212 627 5504 • Email: info@mutablemusic.com



IN BERGWERK ROJO MUSIK CO/UP MPH 11

FOLO ESTRADA THE PIGEON STYLING STUDIO OF SEBASTIEN KERKHOFF
MANOOGIAN RECORDS LTD. © 1995 ROJO MUSIC CO. INC.

BESTSELLER IN BERGWERK FROM
SPECIAL EDITION ROJO MUSIC CO. LTD.
PLATINUM RECORDS LTD. © 1995 ROJO MUSIC CO. INC.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PARISIAN SKINS
PROUDLY PRESENTS ROJO M.



Schematic Music Company Catalog #SCH033

Glen Velez - Internal Combustion

The release of Velez's phenomenal hand-drum improvisation from 1985 acts as one of the essential links to an understanding of the relationship between modern electronic composition and prehistoric sound, wherein 'Internal Combustion' finds Velez's intense, lifelong study of the frame drum—all his work for such artists as Steve Reich and Zakir Hussain, his decades of solo and ensemble recordings, his inspiration on, among others, John Cage—is displayed with a total mastery and utter oneness with his instrument...

Winter 2003:

Glen Velez & Various Artists - External Combustion

A compilation of related projects featuring Alvin Lucier, Richard Davis, Bruce Molsky, Michael Mumford, Nels Cline, Brothers, Jack DeJohnette, Lubomyr Melnyk, Paquito D'Rivera, Shostak Reed, and more...



**SILKWORM
YOU ARE DIGNIFIED**

ACOUSTIC COVERS OF SONGS BY SHELLAC,
PAVEMENT, BEDHEAD, ROBBIE FULLKS
& NINA NASTASIA

CD (1289 911-2)

ALSO AVAILABLE:
SILKWORM - ITALIAN PLATINUM
CDP (1200 016-2)



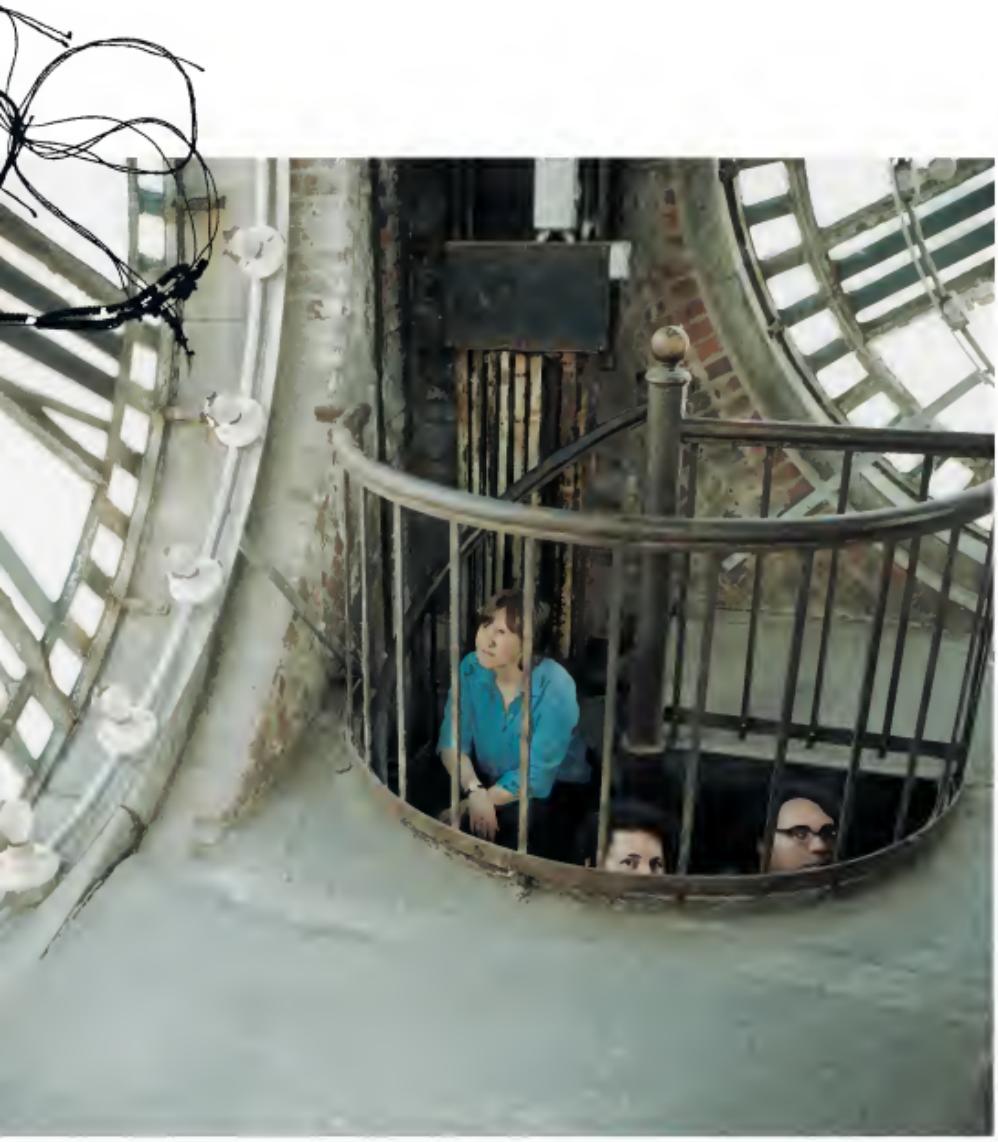
COMING: SALLY CREWE & THE SUDDEN MOVERS CD, SPOON COOP
NEW ALBUMS FROM: JOEL RL PHELPS & THE DOWNER TRIO, TREE SPEAKING CANARIES
MAIL ORDER: YOU ARE DIGNIFIED CDP / LP / CD, E11 POST & PACKING INCLUSIVE
12XU PO BOX 2112 LONDON NW1 2EA WWW.12XU.NET INFO@12XU.NET
DESPATCHED IN THE UK BY YAHOO SILKWORM TEL: 0113 2650000
ISSUED UNDER LICENSE FROM TOUCH A GO

THE NEW SEEKERS

Yo La Tengo's quest to shift the rock music they love into other dimensions in music has led the New Jersey trio into fruitful collaborations with the cream of the East Coast free jazz scene. In New York, David Keenan hears the tale of their 15 year evolution and their monstrous appetite for brain frying sound.

Photos: Chris Buck





In the shadow of New York's Brooklyn Bridge, on the concourse of what just might be the greatest ice cream parlour in the world, Yo La Tengo bassist, Dump maammon and all-round pop-cultural sump James McNew is reciting the stations of his teenage epiphany. "I grew up in Charlottesville, Virginia," he starts. "I liked Metal and punk rock and I read Green magazine from an early age. It was brain frying stuff. Brain frying. It took me so long to figure out what their plan was, which was to have big pictures of Dave Lee Roth on the front then a Pere Ubu feature inside. What really tipped me off was I had an English teacher who spotted me reading Green and then told me that her husband, Robert A Hull – aka Robot Hull – wrote reviews for it. She said she would bring me some records and one day she turned up with a copy of *The Velvet Underground's* White Light/White Heat and the original Nuggets compilation." He breaks from his monologue to mime the top of his head exploding, constellations of skull tracking silent arcs through space. "I was like – thank you! So long! I won't be paying attention to your class ever again. Brain frying stuff. That completely ruined me for the rest of my life. At that point not only did I stop paying attention to schoolwork, I tossed out any idea of taking lessons. Fuck it, I knew enough to do what I wanted to do. Yet somehow I never really believed I could do it for a living because rock musicians were handsome and weren't from Virginia. Sure, I'm handsome, but I don't look like the average skinny guy playing rock music. Then, when I saw The Minutemen, that changed everything. I saw [vocalist and guitarist] D Boon. He looked like me and he was pogging! Look at him go! That was the most liberating night of my entire life. It was like, what am I waiting for? I immediately started writing songs and recording. I had proof that it was possible. Brain frying stuff."

The very existence of Yo La Tengo, which for the past ten years has been made up of James McNew, guitarist/vocalist; Ira Kaplan and drummer/vocalist, Georgia Hubley, is testimony to the possibilities for reinvention and liberation inherent in all the most forward-thinking rock music.

Over a seafood platter at an oversubscribed restaurant in New York's Greenwich Village (Yo La Tengo like their food), Kaplan picks up the thread. "I always tend to look at the development of the band from a more personal angle," he states. "For me a lot of it is to do with getting over shyness and fear. I was so shy that it was impossible to do what I wanted to do, to play in a band. Then I met Georgia at a Feelfeels concert and she was a motivating factor in letting me feel that I could actually make music. I felt comfortable enough with her that I could reveal myself, and I think she did too. Now I could play to almost every record we've made and say what I thought we got a little braver about. To me the changes from record to record more reflect the courage to do this and the courage to do that."

Summer Sun, the new Yo La Tengo album, is a beautiful case in point, a set that sees the group completely rein in their more prolix tendencies, cutting back on the kind of post-Lou Reed ostrich guitar and

extended jamming that bolsters much of their back catalogue. Whereas on previous records the vocals were always semi-submerged in pots of tonal colour, here all three players' voices are pushed a little more to the fore with lyrics that are for the most part actually discernible, while the group's lugubrious songforms are extrapolated into other dimensions with the addition of a host of New York's premier free jazz renegades: trumpeter Roy Campbell Jr, saxophonists Daniel Carter and Satur Matesen, and bassist William Parker. The album title itself is a red herring, with the emotional weight of tracks like "Little Eyes", a chugging electro-hymn half sung, half spoken by Hubley, a world away from the kind of euphoric beach party that Summer Sun immediately hints at. Rather, the album's mood more closely kines up with such exquisitely doleful records as *The Beach Boys' Surfs Up* and Neil Young's *On the Beach*, where the end of summer stands as a metaphor for everything that passes and is gone. It's an album that gives up little on the first few songs, the sort of recording that repays time spent living in it.

"Forget the title," says Hubley. "The title didn't even enter the picture until later in the game – we had a whole other title that we couldn't use. We didn't really know what this record would be like. It kind of took us by surprise. We didn't think it was as melancholy or as close to the last record as it was, even while we were making it." The last record, 2000's *And Then Nothing Turned Itself Inside Out*, was the group's final attempt to expand their vocabulary beyond the echo of guitar-varicisted pop songs, a process that was first seeded during the final studio sessions for 1997's *I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One*.

"We still do the jamming stuff live," Kaplan asserts. "It's not like it's not there, but there was a point during *I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One*, on the song "Moby Octopus", where I was going to go and record the guitar overdub and I just did the thing that everyone knew I would do, which was some kind of noisy thing, I said. 'This doesn't seem right, this is supposed to be a startling moment and instead it's so much what everyone would expect from our record,' it wasn't doing what we wanted it to do, so I came up with this piano part which I think is a lot more striking, and ready from that moment on I've been trying to challenge myself to play the guitar in other ways, even though technically I'm massively limited."

The confidence to up-anchor and take the sound somewhere entirely unexpected was given further impetus by the group's immersion in New York's free jazz scene, beginning in 1999 with the double "7" collaboration with Satur Matesen and *Other Dimensions in Music*, Now 2000/Excalibur 2001 (Egon 1999).

"When we made the Facebook album for Bar None in 1999, Steve Joerg, who now runs the New York free jazz [label] ALUM Fidelity, worked there," Kaplan explains. "We've known him a long time. So when we wanted to do the 7" I asked Steve if he could recommend players who he thought would be receptive to what we were doing. We had written these songs, these fake jazz songs – or maybe they were real – and

we thought, well, if we're fake jazz musicians, would it work if we played them with people who knew what they were doing, people who wouldn't resent us or treat us like dilettantes? So Joerg suggested the *Other Dimensions in Music* guys."

Other Dimensions in Music have been one of the principal anchor points for the spirit of 1960s free music, keeping the flame burning through decades of committed collective activity, harnessing both the music's cosmic aspirations and its voice of righteous protest. For the double single, Yo La Tengo were joined by the group's Daniel Carter, Roy-Campbell Jr and Satur Matesen across four sides of whacked Anarstical boogie, with Kaplan, Hubley and McNew niffing off the blasts of brass with (illegible) percussive and the slam of an electric organ. Following on from these initial experiments, they recruited free percussionist, Susie Ibarra, to provide some temporal levity on *And Then Nothing Turned Itself Inside Out*. But it wasn't until they had begun exiling Summer Sun that they decided to fully incorporate an extended Sun section into the group's ranks.

"We played with the Other Dimensions guys a bunch over the last few years," McNew relates. "We had played shows with them where they played as members of our group, playing on our own songs with little instruction. They'd find a place, mood or colour to add to the songs. It really got us thinking about how these songs could be interpreted. It was really intimidating at first, for the most part I'm confident as a musician but I have to admit I was nervous in this case, those guys are heavyweights. The opportunity was definitely there for me to psych myself out of doing it. But it couldn't have been any more different. They weren't concerned at all about the technical achievements of the people they were playing with. They were more interested in involving themselves in the moment of what we were doing and adapting and communicating within that. That was a really revelatory experience, and amazing to think we could communicate with musicians of that calibre. We did a set about six months ago for our Hanukkah show at Maxwell's, and this time William Parker stayed on stage with us as well. Obviously when he's onstage with you, you try not to play bass as much, so I stuck mostly to percussion. We had finished Summer Sun but hadn't mixed it and during soundcheck we suddenly thought that we should really capitalise on playing with these guys. We did two or three of the songs from Summer Sun that night. They all played so beautifully when it was presented to them out of the blue, so we booked them a week later and they knocked it all out in one day."

Despite the overwhelming gravitational force generated by Parker and co., Yo La Tengo were able to retain the integrity of their sound and material across the whole of the session, fully integrating the fluid spume of freedom into their precisely constructed pop songs. Parker's bass is put to particularly elastic use, with the group cutting it up into sections and treating it with a thick pall of effects. On "Don't Have To Be So Sad" the players set up aquatic washes of guitar

Yo La Tengo (left to right): Georgia Hubley, Ira Kaplan, James McNew



"MY TEACHER GAVE ME COPIES OF WHITE LIGHT/WHITE HEAT AND THE ORIGINAL NUGGETS COMPILATION. I WAS LIKE – THANK YOU! SO LONG! I WON'T BE PAYING ATTENTION TO YOUR CLASS EVER AGAIN. BRAIN FRYING STUFF"

through which they drop little ripples of piano and shuffling electronics that Parker soothes with a tactile pulse, capped by almost subliminal puffs from the horns of Carter, Mateen and Campbell. "Let's Be Still" moves furthest into the path of the brass section, with Parker locked into a dusty groove that Hubley exaggerates into an emaciated take on *On The Corner* funk while Mateen and Carter tongue-spurt flutes. "It was almost a condition of going into the collaboration that we wanted them to play on our record and not vice versa," Kaplan insists. "If we could integrate them in a way that it still felt like us, then great. Still, we didn't direct them too much. As an example of how free they were, on 'Let's Be Still' we didn't even know what instruments they were going to play. We didn't instruct them to play flute, we just said 'play,' and both Daniel and Sabir plucked up flutes. I was shocked, it wasn't what I expected but we wanted to trust them to play it the way they heard it. If we hadn't liked it we might have said something but it was great. It's always exciting to find out how they hear our material."

Clearly, both Kaplan and Hubley – now husband and wife – have come a long way from the early parties and practice room blowouts where they first cut their teeth behind closed doors, still too nervous to play in front of anyone but themselves. Kaplan can claim they first met at a gig by New Jersey art punks The Fecties but McNew has been privy to several conflicting creation myths. "I know stories and hear the occasional reminiscence," he reveals. "Another story is that they met at a Soft Boys show in NYC. It was at some club that was really snooty, the kind of place where Georgia would go but Ira thought was too posh. I remember them butting heads over that kind of stuff. I was always entertained by those arguments."

Prior to their meeting, Kaplan had been writing for *The New York Rocker*, a new wave magazine founded by Alan Betrock that also covered fringe currents such as free jazz. Back then Kaplan was the archetypal frustrated journalist, secretly priming to be a rock star. Hubley, meanwhile, had grown up in uptown Manhattan. Her father, John Hubley, had been a director of animation at Disney, penning layouts for *Snow White* and *Fantasia*; before he walked out during an industrial dispute, he helped found UPA, the company that invented the cartoon character Mr Magoo, among others. During the McCarthy era he was blacklisted for his membership of the Communist Party and was forced to work in commercials, where he would never receive an on-screen credit. However, his later career brought considerable success when, together with his wife Faith, he went on to conceive a string of Academy Award winning short films. John often used improvised dialogue from his children on the soundtracks of his films, and George's voice appears on 1967's *Windy Day* and 1973's *Cockabooey*. He was also one of the first artists – alongside the visionary film maker and architect Harry Smith – to combine animation with flights of improvised jazz, and players like Dizzy Gillespie were regulars around the Hubley household while Georgia was growing up. "I met Dizzy many times," she recalls. "He was pretty crazy, a wild one."

Although at first Hubley was more interested in following in her parents' footsteps, enrolling in art school and working for a time in animation, the advent of punk rock blew all of that out the window. Before hooking up with Kaplan, she played as part of a punk-informed bass and drums duo alongside Wire contributor Byron Coley.

"Meeting Ira was important," Hubley asserts. "When we started playing together it was for fun, we couldn't play but it was fun, doing covers, and it just grew from there. Ira and I had very similar tastes and there's definitely a nervousness that we share; we were nervous to play with each other at first, a couple of shy people coming out of their shells. At the beginning there wasn't much of a concept, we were just drawn to things that we liked to listen to, lots of 60s and garage music, especially in the early 80s with the garage revival. It's easy to play, so it's the sort of thing that's instantly gratifying because it almost sounds immediately like what you're trying to get it to sound like, two chords, basic chumbet."

Yo La Tengo began their first gig at the offices of *The New York Rocker* sometime in 1983, running through adrenaline-fueled cover versions of material like "Headie" for *The Texas Border* by The Flamin' Groovies. From the moment they formed, the group was in a constant state of flux. For Rob The Tiger, their 1986 debut, Kaplan and Hubley called on their friend Dave Schramm for lead guitar, while bass duties were split between Dave Rick, Mike Lewis and Mission Of Burma's Clint Conley, who also produced the session.

"Going back to that first record, Dave Schramm was an amazing guitarist," Kaplan relates. "And I know we were holding behind him to a certain degree." Nevertheless, it's a thinking bluffer, with Schramm's guitar set to explode across a set of primatively rendered power punk ballads and 60s pop covers like The Kinks' "Big Sky" and Love's "A House Is Not A Home".

"Dave Rick was our first bass player and he said at the time he was going to form his own band and eventually he did, he put together Phantom Tollbooth," Kaplan explains. "Dave Schramm also left. All our members were, at best, one foot in and one foot out but we thought things were working out fine that way. When we released President Yo La Tengo in 1989, that wasn't even a record made by a group, it had two songs from a live session, something left over from another session, two different bassists, but we were really happy with how it worked. After that we thought, well, maybe we don't have to operate as a real band after all. However, once we met James we realized just how uncomfortable we had really been about not having a regular group."

After McNew's brain frying brush with the furthest gonzo reaches of *Cream* magazine and his epiphany encounter with The Minutemen, he set out to document the first tasteable stirrings of the muse across a batch of cassettes recorded under the name Dump, a guise he still operates under today. He was also involved in publishing his own fanzine, *And Suddenly*, and in his guise as a zine editor he first made contact with Michael Cudahy and Liz Cox of the

Boston group Christmas. "I saw Christmas and Yo La Tengo live within a week of each other," he recalls. "I had no idea that 15 years later I'd be telling the story. President Yo La Tengo had just come out and I loved that record, Ira was playing crazy freakout guitar, about five songs across the whole set, I remember liking it a lot." In the event, McNew hooked up with Christmas during their ill-fated dalliance with IRS Records, who set on their third and final album, *Vortex*, and eventually dropped the group from the label. It was during this hiatus that McNew first met up with Kaplan and Hubley, over dinner (inevitably) with their friends Cox and Cudahy.

"At dinner they mentioned they had a tour booked but weren't sure who would be playing with them," McNew recalls. "Through a mouthful of food I said, 'Oh, I'll do it.' They called me two days later and asked if I was serious, I said, 'Sure.' So I would drive down from Providence to NYC on weekends to practise for them. We did that five or six times and went on tour, two weeks in the US and three weeks alongside Eleventh Dream Fly in Europe. It was the most exciting time I ever had, I'd never been out of the country, never been anywhere really. I wound up moving to NY and I just kept showing up at practice, I think they just hadn't figured out a way to get rid of me." Although the first album McNew cut with the band was 1992's *May I Sing With Me*, that record feels more like a clearing of the boards than a new beginning. Rather, it was 1993's *Peaceful* that was the first "real" Yo La Tengo record, and the one that first flagged them as potential heirs to the downtown crown of The Velvet Underground, a position they've since cemented with their appearance as The Velvets in Mary Harron's 1996 movie about the life of Valerie Solanas, *I Shot Andy Warhol*.

The new sound was dominated by banks of juddering organ, lethargic phased guitar, minimal thudding percussion and vocals that sounded like the last gasps of someone drowning. The title *Peaceful* hints at the kind of birthing pains involved in the whole exercise, with the group wrestling with a new sonic blueprint in the midst of legal hassles with their former label. "For me *Peaceful* is definitely our first real record," Kaplan confirms. "One of the big things for me was having James in the group and knowing that he actually wanted to be there. That meant a lot. James happens to be frighteningly talented but that doesn't matter, if he were inept that wouldn't matter either. Personality-wise we meshed, and that's why something good came out of it. We utilized what he was good at, but we would have done that regardless of what his particular talent actually was."

With this line-up in place, Yo La Tengo became a magnet for the many warped manifestations of leftfield popular culture, attracting wildcard collaborators that ranged from The Kinks' Ray Davies, Ronnie Spector and David Grubbs (all guests at various live shows), to director Hal Hartley (they've appeared on the soundtrack to two of his movies, and he's directed a video promo in return) and *The Simpsons* (they recorded a psychedelic version of the title theme). In turn, their annual shows at Hanukkah, the late November Jewish festival, have become

"BECAUSE IT'S HANUKKAH WE LIKE TO DO LOTS OF SONGS WRITTEN BY JEWS. SO WE GOT DAVID BYRNE TO SING "LOVE COMES IN SPURTS" BY RICHARD HELL"



legendary for their drawing power. "David Byrne said for one show too," Kaplan states. "Because it's Hanukkah we like to do lots of songs written by Jews so we got David Byrne to sing "Love Comes In Spurts" by Richard Hell. We got The Sun Ra Arkestra to come and play as well. A couple of them did "Nuclear War" with us that night, then we played in Philadelphia and we put out an open invitation to anyone who wanted to sit in with us from The Arkestra. We got three members who played about half the set with us. Danny Thompson, Tyrone Hill and Dewey Davis. At the soundcheck we ran through seven songs and winged three more for the encore. It was so great, we asked them to DC and they came to NYC as well, three times."

Yo La Tengo's recording of "Nuclear War", Sun Ra's eschatological street rap from 1982, took it into less winter's Billboard Top Ten, lending it the hit single status that Sun Ra had long proscribed. More recently they've been working with Yoko Ono on a tribute to John Mitchell and Stephen Trask's *Hedwig And The Angry Inch* (2001), a cult film which was previously a rock musical. As McNew succinctly puts it: "The line between fantasy and reality has taken a consistent pounding throughout our career.

"All these projects just sort of reflect our personalities and what happens in our collective brain," he expands. "We love all those things and we could probably talk about any of them at length. Sometimes it's really weird, though. We spent a lot of time working on the Ray Davies project for our Hanukkah show and then during a lunch break it suddenly dawned on me: I'm eating a sandwich with Ray Davies. Holy shit! But it's funny that while we're working we're ourselves, doing what we do, not outwardly terrified, confident that we're there for a reason, to be ourselves. I felt that way when we made an album with Jad Fair, even though I was in awe and had worshipped him my whole life."

Above all, Yo La Tengo still operate as fans, as a back catalogue stuffed to the ears with wacky cover versions attests to. They take rock at its word, moulding its forms to more closely reflect and complement their innate awkwardness, in the process birthing a hybrid that stays true to the various personal idiosyncrasies of the players while enjoying a unique, tangential relationship with the rock canon.

"That's what I love about all those American Song Poem recordings that studio hacks made to order in the '60s and '70s," Kaplan says, referring to recently unearthed recordings of execrable amateur lyrics set to song by professional studio musicians. "Those are amazing. Those guys were not rock musicians, but that's the language of the times and because their mission was to do stuff as commercially as possible they had to take it on board. So those recordings present a particularly warped take on that whole culture. The idea of rock music played by non-rock musicians is so weirdly revealing and personal, it's kind of like what we're doing with free jazz and our idea of "fake jazz". It's simple but we're not pretending that we come from that."

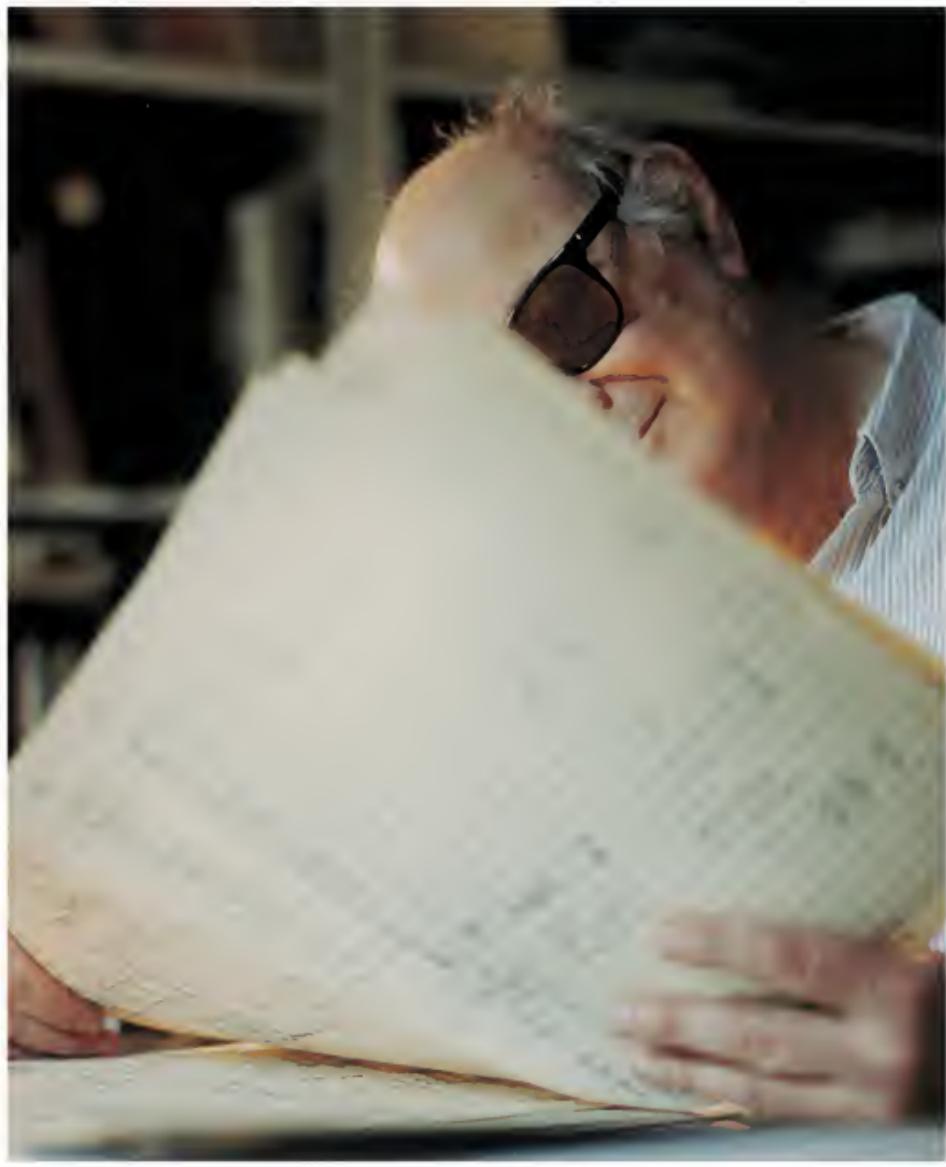
And in those first few brave steps towards previously unexplored tonal vistas, whole new universes are born. □ Summer Sun is out now on Matador



THEATRE OF WAR

After running away to Europe from Argentina in 1957, composer Mauricio Kagel found a role as the imp poking fun at the dogmatic approach of the New Music establishment characterised by Stockhausen and Boulez. In a rare interview, classical music's black sheep tells Philip Clark about a lifetime of subversion, and how he foresaw the last year's hostage siege in a Moscow theatre.

Photos: Frank Bauer



"Black mark against my name? Yes, and I worked very hard to get it!" Mauricio Kagel proclaims with an impish grin, as we sit in the book-lined snug of Amsterdam's Ambassade Hotel. Kagel was born in Buenos Aires in 1935, to an Argentine-Jewish family with strong left wing views. He was reborn in 1957, when he decided to escape from a Perón regime that insisted its state composers conform to a rigid, dry neoclassical style. The irresistible pull of the Central European New Music scene prompted his relocation to Cologne, Germany, at a crucial moment in the development of post-war contemporary music. In Darmstadt, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez were focusing on the acoustic fabric of sound itself, rather than sculpting with notes on paper, out of a desire to instigate a musical Year Zero. Finding it purist and self-important, Kagel roundly rejected the hardline Darmstadt doctrine. Instead he set about plundering musical tradition and polluting modernist idealism, which makes him a kind of soothsayer for postmodernism. The previous year, his contemporary György Ligeti had also wound up in Cologne after fleeing the Soviet tanks sent in to crush Hungary's 1956 uprising. The two refugees found they shared a more tolerant and less dogmatic vision of modernism.

"There were some European composers at this time who viewed me as a fugitive bird from Argentina that they wanted to shoot out of the sky," Kagel continues, "but I was immediately friendly with Ligeti, and we have always shared an interest in one another's work. There's a lot of space in this world for different positions and aesthetics. The only thing I ask is that the result has to be interesting. If somebody tells me that they want to produce boring music as a philosophical point of view then I accept it – but the boring music must be exciting."

Kagel is in Amsterdam to premier his new *Doppelsetzett* (Double Sextet), played by The Schoenberg Ensemble under conductor Rembert de Leeuw. The Dutch music scene has long regarded Kagel as one of their own, and he's built an enduring relationship with de Leeuw and the Ensemble's musicians. Not to mention with the Ambassade Hotel, which has traditionally welcomed mavericks and auteurs. Kagel, however, smells a rat. As his eyes scan the surrounding shelves – which carry authors as diverse as Umberto Eco (another Ambassade regular) and blockbuster novelist Leslie Thomas – he delights in pointing out that the books look like they have never been read. In his work too, Kagel has long thrived on unpacking the often pernicious thin divide between pretence and truth.

In a musical century dominated by impressionism, serialism, minimalism, totalism and postmodernism, Kagel has side-stepped "isms" altogether. Instead he has doggedly interrogated modern music and its relationship to tradition. He has drawn on his background in musical theatre, coaching singers at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, to radicalise and disrupt the concert experience, while offering a critique on its performance conventions and rituals. Targeting the corrupting nature of institutions or vested interests is more important to Kagel the satirist and provocateur than advancing a personal political agenda. Musically and politically, his vision can be summed up as anti-dogmatic, suggesting that fertile and stimulating ideas in the field of music – and by extension society at large – are trampled on by protocol and spin. Being a composer not a politician, Kagel frames his anti-establishment tendencies as musical discourse.

Although the bulk of his pieces are concerned for conventional classical forces, Kagel has never been afraid to question the grip of the score on Western art music. Unimpressed by the navel-gazing tendency prevalent in electronic music, Kagel instead embraces

new technologies as expressive media in their own right. His Fluxus-style one-off compositions and happenings have introduced extramusical elements such as coffee grinders, wallcatalasses and electric fans; "chromatic games" for light sources, tapes, etc (*Camera Obscura*, 1965); a "score" which is actually a filmed collage of Beethoven motifs (Ludwig Van, 1970). Film and pieces conceived for radio form a significant part of his output. In these works, Kagel often turns his penetrating gaze on the global village and its responses to media messages. Kagel attacks the PR machinery of party politics in *Der Trubel* (1981), and the hold of organised religion in his stage work *Die Erschöpfung Der Welt / The Exhaustion Of The World* (1984). His pluralist philosophy, he suggests, owes much to his formative experiences in Argentina, while his status as an outsider in German musical life allows him to take a critically detached view of the avant-garde milieu in which he landed.

The intellectual life of late 1930s and early 40s Buenos Aires, Kagel explains, was akin to the New York of the 1960s. Film, theatre, literature and philosophy were as much a part of his artistic awakening as music. The movie slacker of Laurel & Hardy, Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin sat easily in his mind alongside his studies of 17th century philosophers such as Spinoza. His English literature professor at Buenos Aires' Colegio Libre was the crown prince of magic realism, Jorge Luis Borges, and although Kagel believes the influence of Borges' narrative labyrinths on his own music has been merely "subliminal", his awe at Borges' virtuosic analysis of Romantic poets like Shelley, Byron, Blake and Tennyson remains undiminished. Kagel's musical experiences were formed by his local New Music society in Buenos Aires and later by his work as a vocal coach at the Teatro Colón. Through the New Music society he got to gauge his own formative efforts against the works of established figures like Schoenberg, Stravinsky and Bartók. Meanwhile, his experience working at the opera house convinced him that art could also be absurd.

Kagel's most radical deconstruction of operatic convention is his plotless *Staatstheater* (National Theatre), completed in 1970. In one scene called "Répertoire", performers mime semi-joking and purposefully banal gestures designed to puncture a hole in the pomp of grand operatic fanfare and egos.

"I was very near to the birth of pieces when I was working at the Teatro Colón and I learnt how theatre functions, but also how theatre doesn't function," Kagel explains. "Staatstheater was commissioned by the Hamburg Opera, but I think calling it an 'anti-opera' is too easy. It's a deconstructed opera – written before deconstruction became fashionable – or perhaps an 'open-puzzle'. In one scene, each singer is dressed in the role of a different opera. However, they are singing my music, and the result is a visualisation of opera's past. You might see Macbeth on stage, but what he sings has nothing to do with [Verdi's] Macbeth, and therefore the counterpart between hearing, knowing and seeing works on a very complex level."

Since its first production, Staatstheater has only been revived in its complete form four times. Perhaps opera companies find its subversive implications dangerously revealing. Certainly, Staatstheater explores the opera establishment's current vogue for adapting novels like *The Handmaid's Tale* or Sophie's Choice as the desperate last stand of a form that's mislaid its relevance. Ligeti has ready acknowledged the influence of Kagel on his own self-described "anti-opera". *Le Grand Macabre*, even though he had already deconstructed the theatrical gesture himself in two works, *Aventures* and *Nouvelles Aventures*, which predate Staatstheater. Otherwise Heimat

Lachenmann's late 1990s masterpiece *Das Mädchen Mit Den Schweißflecken* (see *The Wire* 228) is one of the few recent works with courage enough to fully develop Staatstheater's provocative stance.

The subsequent neglect of Staatstheater has not deterred Kagel from following the impulses of his unique theatrical imagination. Probe (1971) has no performers at all, only a theatre director who indicates how the audience might interact with props like spotlights, microphones and loudspeakers. Other pieces have incorporated stagehands (Umzug), acrobats (Vomité), gymnasts (Ex-Promen) and even 111 cyclists (A Breeze) into the action. When Kagel was working at the Cologne Opera, he was amused to notice during the dress rehearsal how the conductor directed the rehearsal pianist as though he was a full orchestra. That detail became the starting point for *Aus Deutschland* (From Germany, 1977-80).

"The sight of a conductor conducting a solo piano was surreal," laughs Kagel, "and I decided to do a piano opera. Other instruments join at the end, but the piano is always present. Sometimes there is one piano, sometimes two, and at one point the piano is offstage. The subject of *Aus Deutschland* is Romanticism, and I find that the Romantic impulse has never stopped very interesting. I am a child of the 12-tone age, but even expressivism is a neurotic extension of Romanticism. And in 19th century Lieder [art songs] the idea of blurring the edges between male and female has always seemed to me to be remarkably modern. Most Lieder of Schumann, Schubert and Brahms can be sung by either male or female singers, and suddenly the object [the loved one] is not interesting, but the fact that he is singing that he's in love. It's an androgynous statement, and not important whether he is singing to a male or a female. I thought about how I could build a theatrical piece that played with these gender roles."

The structure of *Aus Deutschland* displays Kagel at his most subtle. The images and subjects of different Lieder are fused into a free flowing sequence, but the sources themselves are buried in a subterranean level within the overall construct. While other composers might drop musical references as a crowd-pleasing ploy, there's nothing remotely ingratiating in Kagel's use of quotation. "Relating ideas to tradition but then starting again from the beginning provides me with a lot of creative energy and possibility for inventiveness," says Kagel. "There is an empty space, and in this space I am putting the remains of music. This is quite different from accumulating music as quotation, and in a composition I consider each quotation as a mis-success. When you hear a new work for the first time, more energy is required than listening to a piece you already know. Very few composers quote from pieces that are unknown, and the function of quotation is therefore to make each listener feel as though they are in luck."

Kagel's most recent subversion of operatic space is *Entführung Im Konzertsaal* (Kidnapping In The Concert Hall), which he completed around the turn of this century, some 30 years after Staatstheater. Before curtain up, the stage is set for a concert. However, when only half the orchestra turns up, Kagel creates the pretence that the rest are being held hostage at gunpoint backstage, while the kidnapper communicates with the conductor by phone. Expertly aligning the eeriness of his score with theatrical illusion, Kagel leaves you convinced that there is indeed an assassination happening out of sight. Satirising the audience's willingness to suspend disbelief even as the success of the work depends on it, Kagel reveals the absurdity of opera's outmoded performance rituals. And by seeding the audience's doubts about their own safety with his plausible hostage scenario, Kagel injects a sense of danger and



the dark unknowable into a hidebound tradition.

"I've become accustomed to the fact that when people go to the opera they look at the stage but hear the music less intensively," he reflects. "I, however, take the theatre seriously, which means I try to compose the theatrical events on the same level of density as the music. Theatre has been contaminated by its repertoire and by a curious misinterpretation of musical history. I made the decision to look critically at this contamination. Style doesn't really exist in opera, and the genre seems timeless to me."

Since the Moscow theatre siege by Chechen freedom fighters last October, *Entführung im Kontakte*'s kidnapping scenario has acquired unexpected topicality. When it was performed in Birmingham at the end of 2000, the audience's belly laughs grew increasingly uncomfortable as the calamitous events unfolded. The drama ends in death, and Kägel himself is a little freaked that fiction and reality overlapped each other so quickly. "We're living in a world where catastrophes are already reality, and disasters are imminent. So what do we do? We do music!" he laughs sardonically. "If you are conscious of the way the world functions, then you must have real doubts and frustrations about being a musician or a composer. The death in this piece is backstory, but you know that a disaster has occurred, and that the musicians have been annihilated. When I heard about the siege in Moscow, the incredible thing was that the main tool of communication for the terrorists was the telephone. [And] in my piece the plot is realised through a telephone conversation between the conductor and the kidnapper."

When he first arrived in Cologne, Kägel had intended to immerse himself inside the legendary electronic music studio at the WDR radio station. After all, this was the studio where Stockhausen had just composed his groundbreaking electronic transformation of the voice, *Gesang Der Junglinge*. But Kägel quickly realised that electronic music had as many duplicitous trapdoors as opera. "I found concerts of electronic music to be rather curious and melancholic events," he muses. "The audience were looking at the speakers as though they were musicians, and were perhaps even waiting for musicians to emerge from the inside. I knew that this could not work, and it was better to hear this music on the radio at home." Kägel's diagnosis of the difficulty in presenting electronic music has surely been validated by history. His response to the problem came with *Transición II* (1958-59) and in the vast hybrid electronic/acoustic soundscape *Acustica*, completed a decade later. *Transición II* contains in embryo Kägel's obsession with questioning the way musical notation operates in real time. Like Stockhausen's *Kontakte* (which appeared at exactly the same time as *Transición II*), Kägel juxtaposes the sound of piano and percussion with its electronically generated accompaniment. The pianist can choose what order to play the 35 pages of manuscript, and is also at liberty to select other elements to plug the gaps punctured in the fabric of the composition. The percussionist's role as a transitional figure between piano and electronics is made literal on stage, as he or she plays on the piano's wood and metal guts. A prerecorded electronic tape provides a fixed point of reference, while a sound engineer tapes moments of the performance in real time and immediately fires 'samples' back at the musicians. Like the counterpoint between real and historical time in his *Sankt-Bach-Passion* (1985), the temporal eruptions of *Transición II* mess with the audience's perception of artificial 'concert' time.

Despite its formal innovations, *Transición II* is not secure in the confidence of its own distinctive

harmonic or gestural language. However, by the time he created *Acustica* (1968-70), Kägel's compositional language had matured to reflect both his outsider status and sense of ironic distance from the 'establishished' avant garde. Scored for "experimental sound producers and loudspeakers", the first sound to emerge in *Acustica* is the squeaking of a slowly deflating balloon. Kägel's self-assembled faux-guitars and plucked, beaten percussion instruments forge an uncomfortable alliance with the electronic sounds, sometimes swamping them entirely. A warbling Italian operatic baritone voice occasionally rises to the surface, as Kägel builds a dynamic out of the cultural clash between conventional musical sounds and the emerging "brawe new world" of electronics. In *Musik Für Renaissance Instruments* (1965-66), in which Kägel writes contemporary music for instruments long regarded as obsolete) and *Exotica* (1970-71, where orchestra members must play "ethno" and foreign instruments which they've never seen before), Kägel explored further this dialectical tug between progressive experiences and regressive appetites. This approach put Kägel at loggerheads with avant garde 'establishment' figures like Stockhausen, who regarded his referential and ironic language to be riven with paradoxes and impurities. This was exactly the reaction Kägel had intended to provoke.

"In Argentina I was not interested in folklorism," he says, describing the early evolution of his musical language. "I did not want to write tangos or Aboriginal music with wrong chords. I wanted to investigate the possibilities of 'expressive' music. However I found that when I came to Europe the biggest problem with 12-tone music was in the harmony. It was no longer possible to build a place from the attraction and repulsion of chords. As the aesthetic of music has changed over hundreds of years, composers have continually found new ways to exploit the tension and release of chords and keys. Harmony is like breathing and needs to renew its supply of oxygen. I became conscious very early on that 12-tone music eliminated this possibility."

While *Transición II* shadowed Stockhausen's *Kontakte*, Kägel's *Hörspielphonie* (1959-61) experimented with form on a scale every bit as ambitious as the self-declared maestro's *Gruppen* for three orchestras. Premiered in Cologne in 1962, *Hörspielphonie* presents a scintillating alternative to much of the atonal music of the time. In classical music, "heterophony" is normally defined as the result of two or more musicians simultaneously performing different forms of the same melody. Kägel's piece expands this literal meaning into a heterophony made from collections of smaller micro-heterophonies. A group of 42 solo instruments (multiple soloists being a typical Kägel ploy) are assigned the instrumental colours of archetypes from the orchestral canon. Kägel likens the process to an organist releasing his instrument's stops to produce a preset sound. In *Hörspielphonie*, there's a 'Verkiss' stop, a 'Schoenberg' stop and one metaphorically labelled (after Debussy) as 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'une faune'. Against these borrowed moulds, Kägel uses a sophisticated vocabulary of graphic symbols in the rest of the orchestra to ignite a looser and more random heterophony.

The message of *Hörspielphonie* is that by overthrowing a traditional notion of 'orchestration' and devising methods that challenge the feudal system of control through which orchestras operate, the orchestra's rebirth as a creative force becomes a real possibility. Needless to say, the orchestra members who premiered it were perplexed by Kägel's intentions. By placing even the limited creative responsibility of graphic notation on the musicians' shoulders, Kägel had tipped the power balance between composer and

orchestra musician in favour of the players. Predictably enough, the first musicians to perform the piece apparently found such freedom intimidating and openly criticised the composer. Kägel got his own back when he dedicated the piece to "the Marqués de Sade and the West German Radio Symphony Orchestra".

"In my writing for this section of the orchestra, I purposefully made the direction and limits of what the players were to do unclear," clarifies Kägel. "That means that the musical notation and its realisation are suddenly in conflict. However, I never ask the players to improvise. I greatly admire the skill and inventiveness of jazz musicians like Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus and Ornette Coleman, but asking classically trained players of New Music to improvise is only relatively possible. The best you can hope for is that they will spontaneously reproduce a given language, and this is also the extent of what many jazz musicians and improvisers can achieve. For real improvisation you have to create a new language, and many improvisers are therefore not as free as they would like."

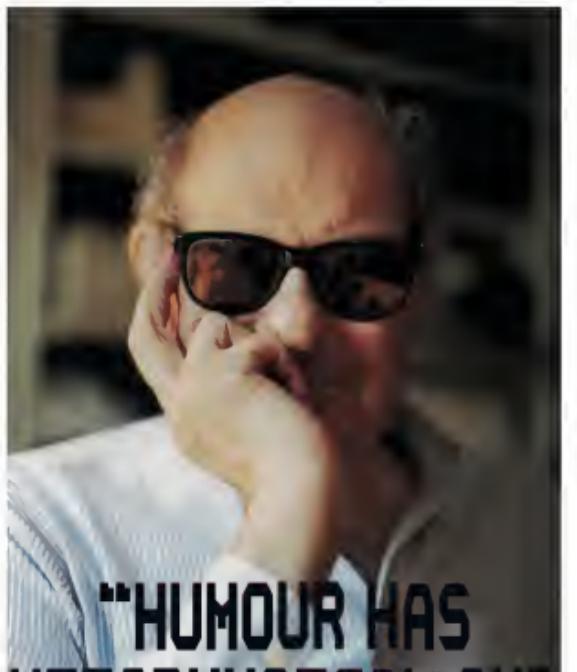
Kägel has written that *Hörspielphonie* is so dry that "after a few minutes one either turns off or discovers countless delights". The work is partly a wry comment on composers who are prepared to pull out all the stops, only to achieve an orchestration that sounds like Varèse or Debussy, completely unaware of their sonic forgery. But this humourous aside is buried within the concept of the piece, and it's not the punchline. Typically, the irony in Kägel's concert music from the 1960s is more often understated than overtly spelt out. From the 1970s onwards, however, his pieces become infused with a more explicit repertoire of drill reportage, satirical jokes and custard-pie slapstick. But he is far from mellowing. His new works are ever more pointed and penetrating in their investigation of the role of art in society.

As early as 1960, with his *Sur Soi* (On Stage), Kägel had satirised the New Music scene by devising a convoluted and near-meaningless text that parodied the kind of heated polemical discussions about New Music heard at festivals and conferences.

Instrumentalists shadow the direction of the speech with gestures that are sometimes expressive, but are more often as pompous and vacuous as the text. By 1979, Kägel had extended this concept to the radio piece *Der Tribun* (1978-79), in which he himself took the role of an orator delivering a polished political speech against a background of triumphalist brass band music. But the words are gobbledegook, arbitrarily cobbled together from soundbites and slogans that he had invented in the style of newspaper headlines and political interviews. If *Sur Soi* parodies the self-important regard with which the New Music scene views itself, *Der Tribun* satirises similar attitudes in the Western political culture of style over substance.

Radio and film have allowed Kägel to act on his critiques of the concert hall and opera, and also to engage with electronic media. Written to celebrate the bicentenary of Beethoven's birth in 1970, *Ludwig Van* exists both as a film and in a version for chamber ensemble. In the film, a camera slowly pans around an imaginary 'Beethoven house', where fragments of Beethoven's music have been pasted onto the walls (one of the set designers was the artist Joseph Beuys). Meanwhile, the players read the music from photographs of these haphazardly arranged scores. Because they have been arranged for the eye and not the ear, the grammar of musical notation – clefs, key signatures, time signatures and the correct ordering of bars – has been obliterated, and instead the listener hears Beethoven's music through a smudged and

Meacco Kägel at work in his Cologne residence, April 2003



"HUMOUR HAS METAPHYSICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL DIMENSIONS THAT TOUCH ME ON A DEEP LEVEL"

distorted looking glass. Though it's subtitled Homage à Beethoven, the piece questions the classical music heritage industry's obsession with anniversaries, Kagel's sardines have led some to view him as the joker in the 1950s avant garde pack. But enjoying Kagel's jokes without appreciating the darker undertones of his satire is to underestimate the subversive nature of his ideas. Kagel himself is in no doubt that humour is a grave business.

"Yes, I have a sense of humour," he admits, "and already as a child I was very suspicious of people who were terribly serious. You know, to say 'I am serious' is a quite ridiculous statement, and if someone is ideologically serious it is often a mask. Humour has metaphysical and philosophical dimensions that touch me on a deep level, and it can only take people seriously if they have a sense of humour. In our profession there are many people who use seriousness only to stress how important they are as a composer or a conductor. However, with humour it becomes possible to express a wide spectrum of ideas."

Kagel has recently found a natural home on the decidedly postmodernist and often whimsical Winter & Winter label, founded by Stefan Winter. Among W&W's first Kagel releases was the extraordinary radio piece *Polytechnik Play*, which was inspired by a visit to a music series for Poking fun at the inflated sales pitch of a music industry sector more concerned with ringing cash tills than art, Kagel works into its textures the simultaneous looping of canned music and live performance deployed, he dryly notes, by the organisers without much discernment.

In contrast, the newly issued CD of Kagel's *First Piano Trio* from 1985 (coupled with *Black Madrigal*, and played by The Schoenberg Ensemble) grew from the blissful experience Kagel had when he was preparing his theatrical epic on the Devil, *Der Mundliche Verrat* (*The Oral Treason*, 1981-83). "The trio is an instrumentation of the theatrical work that explores the characters in a new way," he comments. "Before *Der Mundliche Verrat* went into production, I'd written my music as a piano score. I like the idea of trying to work in the exact opposite way to how I normally approach a piece, and when I was preparing for the theatre piece, I wrote the music first and then looked for texts. I therefore wrote sections of very different character, and this is why I say the *Piano Tri* is built from character pieces."

The premiere of his *Doppelzextett* reprises Kagel's relationship with The Schoenberg Ensemble, who exemplify the qualities the composer expects from musicians engaging with his scores. "Difficulty is not really the issue," he contends. "But the musician must have the impression that if he works on the part, he will do it better. The way a composer communicates to musicians and then to listeners is through notation, and this code has to be decipherable or else it is not a proper code. One of the major problems with interpretation is how to avoid merely reproducing a particular idea of a piece. A performer has to become the composer as they play the piece."

"The French," Kagel concludes, "have a marvelous word: *déchiffrer*, which means 'to read' the code, rather than 'to copy'. This is what I am asking my performers to do." □ Kagel's *Piano Trio* is on Winter & Winter, *Hélènephone* and *Der Tribut* is on Wergo, and Mode has scheduled new versions of *Transición II* and *Phonophonia* for the autumn. *Anudivis/Nove* have a seven-volume Kagel edition (including *St. Bach-Passion*), and Deutsche Grammophon have just released *1898* and *Music for Renaissance Instruments*. A new performance of Ludwig Van and other works is available on Aeon. Kagel is the featured composer at this month's Aldeburgh Festival – details from www.aldeburgh.co.uk. Thanks to Ian Pace

THE PRIMER:

SOFT MACHINE

A bi-monthly guide to the core recordings of a particular artist or genre. This month:
John Cratchley and Samantha Brown trace Soft Machine's passage from London's psychedelic underground
to their later jazz rock peaks, while picking up the trails of founding members Kevin Ayers, Daevid Allen and
Robert Wyatt, and touching base with their fellow pioneers Keith Tippett and Nucleus.

Illustration: Savage Pencil



The common criticism of jazz-rock argues that it pursued the worst excesses of each genre, and caused irrevocable damage to both. Peter Schubze, who produced many jazz-rock concerts for Radio Bremen in the 1970s, recalls that during this time many jazz groups incorporated rock sensibilities, but far fewer rockers repudiated the commitment. The outstanding exception was Soft Machine. At the height of their powers, this polymorphous British outfit achieved a complete synthesis of rock and jazz by drawing not on the excesses, but the strengths of both: raw energy, high volume, intricate time signatures, exemplary musicianship, expressive improvisation, gravitas and whimsy. To arrive at such a successful amalgam required a rare mix of alchemy and serendipity.

The journey starts in the early 1960s, in Canterbury, Kent, where grammar school friends Robert Wyatt, Hugh Hopper and Mike Ratledge bonded over a shared passion for the bop and free jazz of Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk and Ornette Coleman. In early 1962 Wyatt befriended Gavyn Allen, an itinerant Australian guitarist and Beat poetry aficionado. Allen became a mentor to the three friends, inviting them to join him in London for an event at the ICA performing free jazz and poetry in the company of Brian Gysin and William S Burroughs. Soon after, Allen moved to Paris to conduct tape experiments with Burroughs and the then relatively unknown Terry Riley, among others. Back in Canterbury, meanwhile, Ratledge left for Oxford to study philosophy; and Wyatt and Hopper formed The Wilde Flowers with Hopper's brother Brian, Pye Hastings, Richard and David Sinclair, Richard Coughlan and Kevin Ayers. A few *Voiceprint* compilations documenting the so-called Canterbury scene quickly scotch the legend about it being the UK's Haight-Ashbury, but they usefully reveal The Wilde Flowers as a not-untypical local group – bar the odd jolt of free jazz – playing R&B and soul covers and originals. Allen eventually returned to Canterbury with unknown American guitarist Larry Nolan to rehearse with Ayers. The two invited Ratledge, back from Oxford, and Wyatt to join them, leaving the rest of The Wilde Flowers to form Canterbury's other great mastiffs, Caravan.

When Nolan left as quickly as he came, they went out as a quartet with Allen taking over on guitar, Wyatt on drums and vocals, Ratledge on organ, and Ayers on bass and vocals. After a mercifully brief spell playing out as Mr Head, in mid-1966 they renamed themselves The Soft Machine, after the Burroughs novel, with author's blessing. Although in the beginning Soft Machine worked from a song base, it was fed by two highly idiosyncratic writers in Ayers and Wyatt, while their penchant for improvisation meant they were soon taking their songs beyond the standard three minute pop banner. About the only place the group felt any sense of belonging was in London's burgeoning psychedelic underground, which in its pre-*Hitchcock Park* period was a loose amalgam of heads open to all shades of weirdness.

Residencies at the UFO and Zebra clubs and extensive touring in the UK followed until July 1966. Outside London's head set, however, the group quickly ran into hostile, uncomprehending audiences with little sympathy for the Soft Machine brand of psychedelic revolution, which was founded on porous medleys of songs and jams at excessive volume. In the summer of 1967, they temporarily quit the UK for dates in France, only to lose guitarist Allen on their way back, when he was refused UK entry as an undesirable alien.

For the remainder of 1967, Soft Machine carried on as a trio. In January 1968, they departed for San Francisco to join Jimi Hendrix's US tour as support group. Before returning home, Soft Machine recorded their first album at the Record Plant Studios, New

York. It was eventually released the following year, but only in the USA. Before it came out, Soft Machine had rejoined Hendrix for the winter leg of his US tour. The punishing schedule left the group exhausted, causing them to split up as soon as it was over. But with a two-LP contract to honour, Wyatt and Ratledge were persuaded to reform, recruiting Hugh Hopper on bass in place of Ayers, who had disappeared somewhere in Spain. In 1969, they fulfilled their contractual requirements by recording *Soft Machine Volume 2*.

The chemistry of this Soft Machine trio, experimenting with song sequels and ever extending instrumental bridges at delevelling tempo, triggered the chain reaction that caused the tectonic plates of rock and jazz to shift, grapple and collide. In an incredibly fertile three year span between 1969-71, Soft Machine concurred between three and seven members, as the core trio experimented with a horn section involving trumpeter Marc Chang, Elton Dean on alto sax and saxello, Lyn Dobson on soprano and tenor and Nick Evans on trombone. The horn section, minus Dobson, had been lifted piecemeal from another pioneering jazz-rock outfit: Keith Tippett's Sextet. Tippett was a jazz pianist who was already integrating rock sensibilities seamlessly into his music. His sextet had a fixed horn section, but employed the rhythm players best suited to his music's fast-changing demands. Tippett's bass pool included Jeff Clyne, Roy Babington and Harry Miller, and the drum seat was filled by Phil Howard. John Marshall, Bryan Spring or Alan Jackson. Both Howard and Marshall were destined to replace Wyatt in Soft Machine, when the drumming vocalist was finally squeezed out of the group he founded by an instrumental faction which thought they were above or beyond mere songwriting. Babington also collaborated with The Softs, eventually replacing Hopper. In the meantime, the impact of Miles Davis's *Bitches Brew* period on the rock world was sending ripples to British shores, which was echoed in the electric jazz of Ian Carr's Nucleus, the third indispensable group of UK's great jazz-rock experiment, featuring a rhythm section of Jeff Clyne and John Marshall.

The music exploding out of this Soft Machine/Keith Tippett/Nucleus triangle was a powerful, often astonishing rock-driven fusion fired up on free impulses as it enthusiastically negotiated jazz's trickier time signatures. Between them, they opened up a space where the likes of Henry Cow cross-fertilised with their oppositional rock improv, where Soft Machine founder Davied Allen located an audience for Gong's loopy synths, buksing axes and space rock silliness; where The Softs' Canterbury colleagues Caravan timidly raised the hemline of their post-psychadelic Prog whimsy; if only for a tantalising moment, where Hatfield And The North forged a trilling, if shrill, fusion-tempered rock just before the deluge of thrill-seeking second-string jazzies washed the excitement out of the jazz-rock adventure. But these are bit players of varying importance in this particular story. Besides, most of its principal players managed to engineer their own downfalls without any outside help. After six albums, Soft Machine had shaken out the last of its experimental elements with the loss of bassist Hopper and reedsman Elton Dean, whose playing kept the free flame burning through The Softs' *Third, Fourth and Fifth* releases. Ratledge, meanwhile, sulked his way through *Seven and Bundles* (1978), Soft Machine's first record for their new label Harvest, and then cut the spotlight for a career in library music, apparently. By the time Karl Jenkins took the helm, Soft Machine had completely flattered away their earlier phenomenal ability to orchestrate monumental blocks of fuzz bass, organ and brass noise with wit and grace.

With Jenkins doggedly running the franchise until 1981, Soft Machine accelerated the erosion of the group's reputation that had set in for real when Hopper left after Six. But in truth, the damage had begun earlier, indeed, some argue it was seeded in the same impulses that drove them to become one of the heaviest, most powerful and at times pitiless innovative forces in any field at the dawn of the 70s. These peaks were attained at the great cost of Robert Wyatt's vocals and humane lyrics, not to mention his inspired drumming. Fortunately, labels like Cuneiform, Voicereprint and, latterly, Hux have unearthed a rich vein of archive releases that attest to the group's astonishing power and capacity for change between 1967-71.

It is no coincidence that all Soft Machine's early abscenders – Davied Allen, Hugh Hopper, Elton Dean and Wyatt, both with *Matching Mole* and solo – went on creating absorbing music, while Jenkins made his mark on the charts in the 1980s with the execrable chillout/Gregorian chart project *Adiemus* (which, incidentally, credited Ratledge).

THE SOFT MACHINE

JET PROPELLED PHOTOGRAPHS

CHARX SNM133 CD 16271189

SOFT MACHINE TURNS ON VOL 1

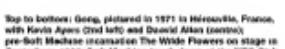
VOICEREPRINT VPH3 CD 16270201

SOFT MACHINE TURNS ON VOL 2

VOICEREPRINT VPH3 CD 16270202

In April 1967, Soft Machine – here, Davied Allen on guitar, Kevin Ayers on bass and vocals, Mike Ratledge on keyboards, and Robert Wyatt on drums and vocals – spent three days in De Lane Lea Studios recording with producer, impresario and entrepreneur Giorgio Gomelsky. Rumour has it the group thought they were making music publishers' demos, but Gomelsky insists they were there to record an album and took the tapes away with him. Years after the fact, these have disseminated under various different titles and compilations, and here as *Jet Propelled Photographs*. Its raw playing and sound quality argue that these were indeed intended as demos, but there's no mistaking the potential latent in the material, a good portion of it written when Ayers and Wyatt were still in The Wilde Flowers. Whatever, the group's unique approach to song sits itself in early versions of Ayers's "Shooting At The Moon" and Hugh Hopper's "Memories" (later covered by Allen on 1971's *Brown Moon* and Wyatt on the B side of his surprise 1974 hit "I'm A Believer"). Though he's basically comping, Ratledge's ear is finely tuned to the nuances of Wyatt's falsetto, tracking mood shifts as the vocal shifts between melancholy, heartbreak and slapstick punning. But Allen's playing ranges from rudimentary to just about competent. He has not yet evolved the shimmering glassiness, an echoing, spacy bottleneck technique he devised after watching Syd Barrett – that distinguishes early Gong. Complementing his own thin, resilient voice, Wyatt's career-long drumming consolidates early Soft Machine's swinging proto-psychadelia.

The bootleg quality live recordings and studio demos constituting the two volumes of *Turns On* confirm the early potential of early Softs with and without Allen, but you have to listen hard to hear it. You have to weigh the significance of their handful of recordings from the Middle Earth club and elsewhere, documenting the group's participation in London's psychedelic underground, against the cruddy sound that renders it nigh impossible to


Top left: Gong, pictured in 1971 in Paris, France, with Kevin Ayers (far left) and David Bainbridge.
Top right: Soft Machine reformation The Wilde Flowers on stage in Canterbury, 1986; Soft Machine touch down at the UFO Club, London, 1987.



divine the ways they were expanding the psychedelic bubble. Sadly, none of these sets include Soft Machine's only single, "Love Makes Sweet Music" (by Kevin Ayers), backed with "Reelin', Squealin', Dealin'" and released on Polydor in 1967.

THE SOFT MACHINE

THE SOFT MACHINE

DUNWY RECORDS MCA022004 CD 1966

VOLUME 2

PROBE SPINNERS CD 1968

To all intents and purposes, Soft Machine's debut album was recorded live in the studio, with 'non-interfering' producers Chas Chandler and Tom Wilson. But they weren't being jazz-purist about it, and when they did indulge the odd studio intervention, such as a 'phased' drum solo zipping between speakers like a stereo demonstration record, they did so to glorious effect. Though they're still song-oriented here, their tunes are as much vehicles for the trio's dazzling instrumental interplay as vessels for the lyrics.

Ridgeley's organ is bursting with celestial energy, while Ayers has developed a keener balance of rebounding rhythm and bass-led melodies in the absence of a guitarist. Wyatt, meanwhile, is already incorporating 'found' lyrics and everyday speech patterns in songs like "Why Am I So Short?". But the highlights are "We Did It Again", an awesome exercise in numberskull minimalism hobbled to a riff every bit as compelling as The Kinks' "You Really Got Me" and Velvet Underground's "What Goes On"; and Ayers's mental wake-up call, "Why Are We Sleeping?"

With Ayers retired hurt after their two 1968 American tours, Wyatt and Ridgeley recruited bass-playing roadie Hugh Hopper to make Volume 2. Now their sole vocalist, Wyatt is in fine form throughout, scatting through "A Coarse British Alphabet" and his more complex wordgames, ironically plummy sleeve notes claim, "in general everybody's heads are more together" and that the music "may impose cerebral responsibilities on the listeners". Too true.

The early Soft Machine sound is a muddle of contradictory elements. Wyatt's drumming is magnificent from the outset; confident, strident, polyrhythmically complex and refreshingly unpredictable. And he's already a wonderfully enigmatic singer, his expressive falsetto negotiating lyrical passages of intellectual reason, elegant fratty and absurdist improvisation. At this stage, Ridgeley is the most technically advanced player and his organ work is as concise as it is magisterial. The departure of both Allen and Ayers had precipitated the group's move into extended improvisation. Upon Hopper's arrival this direction was sealed. With additional saxophone input of Brian Hopper, Soft Machine were steadily moving away from song qua song.

SOFT MACHINE

SPACED

CUNEIFORM RUMBLE CD 1969/1999

A fascinating digression more than their next move, Spaced occupies a unique position within The Softs' output. Resulting from an invitation to produce music for artist Peter Doherty's 'living art installation' at London's Roundhouse in early 1969, the group declined to perform live (although they had famously accompanied a Picasso play in the south of France a year or so earlier). Instead they duly set about amassing prerecorded material to cover for their non-happening at the happening, so to speak. Brian Hopper was again drafted in to add a horn voice. Rehearsed and recorded in an East London warehouse, the finished soundtrack was constructed around loops and effects, and cut together with engineer Paul Woodford using distinctly Heath Robinson methods like looping tapes around milk bottles. The ad hoc methodology produces a distinctive musique



concrete feel, with the resulting tonescapes anticipating the textures of *Ambient*.

SOFT MACHINE BBC RADIO 1967-1971 HUX HUX009 2CD 2003

BACKWARDS

COLUMBIA RUM170 CO 1988/2002

Both these live compilations illuminate how Soft Machine were far better live than in the recording studio, even if the only audience actually present was a radio engineer. Covering the eight sessions the group recorded for John Peel's BBC Top Gear show, the Hux set spans every significant incarnation of the group after David Allen's departure, including their septet experiments with an expanded brass frontline borrowed from Keith Tippett. With Hux's audience, Peal and his producers had a knack for catching the group on the cusp of change, and happily gave the Softs free rein. Even though Wyatt ironically comments on the necessity of shortening tracks to standard pop length in his amazing stream of consciousness rendition of "Moon In June", their song medleys mostly break the ten minute mark. Even so, the group exercise remarkable economy in their *Peel* contributions, making the Hux set a wonderful summary of Soft Machine's growth from their 1967 summer of love to the colder mausoleum monumentalism that prefigured Wyatt's departure in 1971. Wyatt has commented how he got interested in the idea of written songs where the melody line followed the pattern of everyday speech. Thus, in this legendary version of "Moon In June", "I can still remember/The last time we played on Top Gear/And though each little song/Was less than three minutes long/Mike squeezed a solo in somehow/And although we like our longer tunes/It seems polite to cut them down/Tot little bits/They might be hits/Who gives a... after all."

Backwards collates live material from various UK and European dates, including some septet tracks from Paris in November 1968, and a drama recording of "Moon In June" by Wyatt solo. Its solitary nature evidences Wyatt's increasing sense of alienation, as the Softs' power base shifted.

THE KEITH TIPPETT GROUP YOU ARE HERE... I AM THERE DISCHORD RECORDS DSC1163 CD 1995

DEDICATED TO YOU, BUT YOU WEREN'T LISTENING

AKARIA AK937 CD 1971

Pianist Keith Tippett's first album unequivocally led the ground rules for his particular jazz-rock agenda. With all the material written by him, the album has a satisfying continuity. More importantly, this is composition of the highest order; measured and balanced in its positioning of instruments to give maximum dynamic effect. The pieces unravel slowly, with Tippett gradually introducing rock-flavoured influences, while the playing throughout is forthright and sometimes openly aggressive. Even at this early stage in Tippett's development, the integrity of his thought process makes any reference to specific forms superfluous, be they jazz or rock. The second track "I Wish There Was A Nowhere" introduces a repeated vamp over which Elton Dean weaves an accompanied alto solo, while trumpetier Chang and trombonist Evans supply swelling chordal overlays. Bassist Clyne and drummer Jackson build a mesmeric pulse over the 14 minute duration of the composition.

If Tippett's debut album is impressive, ranging from fractured avant-gardism to pulsating repetition, "Dedicated To You" is, quite simply, indispensable. The compositional credits are more evenly dispersed here, with Evans, Dean, Hopper and Chang all contributing. From the outset the album is a rhythmic masterpiece, utilising drummers Wyatt, Phil Howard and Bryan

String as well as conga player Tony Usa. Spontaneous joy is the result, with Chang and Evans in particularly rapturous mood, melding free jazz and rock sensibilities even as they boil to the surface in a fierce bid for independence from each other. Tippett's writing is so integrated, however, that these competing elements are never allowed to tip the scale apart. Instead, they generate a terrific and continuous tension. "Thoughts To Geoff" illustrates this perfectly, with Evans contributing explosive trombone, while Dean's saxello solo on "Green And Orange Night Flight" is worthy of Roland Kirk. Tippett, meanwhile, ranges all over acoustic and electric piano to great effect.

SOFT MACHINE THIRD

COLUMBIA 4744972 CD 1999

The third studio album is the Softs' most complete statement of intent. It was originally released in 1970 as a double LP, with a side each given over to Hopper's "Facelift", Rutledge's "Slightly All The Time", Wyatt's "Moon In June" and Rutledge's "Out-Bloody-Rageous". "Moon In June" is pretty much a solo Wyatt recording, except for Rutledge's fuzzily scrawled organ signature towards the end. Wonderful as it is, it suffers in comparison with the full group's inspired response to the same piece on the Hux BBC Radio set. On Third, the absurdist element that once defined Soft Machine's group character has been all but ousted by the Rutledge-Hopper axis's heavily pedalled emphasis on fuzzed up jazz-rock with horn charts, with new recruit Dean Dean's alto and saxello mostly dicing Wyatt's vocalising. The sacrifice of his voice does not preclude Wyatt bringing the relentless swinging energy and invention of his drumming to Rutledge's and Hopper's splendid side-long compositions. Recorded live at Birmingham's legendary Mothers club and Croydon's Fairfield Hall, Hopper's "Facelift" rises out of a circling electric piano rondo, until it's abruptly halted by Rutledge's heavily fuzzed organ squalls. Gradually Dean works up the courage to begin a conversation for the whole quartet. The core of Rutledge's lowkey composition, "Slightly All The Time", is Hopper's fabulous walking bass part. The organism's other track, "Out-Bloody-Rageous", bursts into being out of endlessly circling keyboards and swooping sax squalls, with an augmented brass section pitching precocious choruses between Dean's and Rutledge's grandstanding.

ROBERT WYATT

THE END OF AN EAR
COLUMBIA 4903422 CD 1970

Describing himself on the sleeve as an "out of work pop singer", Wyatt was still Soft Machine's drummer when he recorded this first solo album in 1970. Though it's a predominantly vocal album, with Wyatt playing "drums, mouth, hand, organ", he's got anything but pop on his mind. The album's two takes of Gil Evans's "The Vegas Tango Part One" are the closest he gets to actual song. Otherwise the music centres on Wyatt's astonishing mosaics of his multitracked vocal scatting. Mark Chang and Elton Dean provide multi-tracked horn and sax treatments, Mark Ebdidge and Caravan's David Sinclair contribute piano and organ, but the fascination here is the way Wyatt overdues his many discrete parts into an uneasy and frequently heartbreaking interrogation of his role as a singer in a group that claims to have outgrown the song.

SOFT MACHINE

NOISETTE

COLUMBIA RUM110 CO 1970/2000

FACELIFT

Voiceprint VP233 2XCD 1970/2001

Noisette is sourced from the same recording of The Softs' January 1970 concert at Croydon Fairfield Hall

from which "Facelift" was partially lifted for Third. Here they went out as a quartet, featuring Lynn Dobson's soprano, flute and vocals. At this stage, the Softs were restlessly seeking new elements to keep themselves fresh, and here the four respond well to the evident emptiness already existing between Dobson and Dean.

When returned to Croydon just three months later on the Facelift double, they had already reverted to their standard 1970 quartet. Captured on an audience recording made by Hugh's brother Brian on a failing portable cassette player, Facelift nevertheless offers today's listener an impeccable impression of how the group must have sounded from 'out front'. The music's so monstrously good, it's almost terrifying. The quartet throw up stock repertoire props, only with all the supports removed. The way they ride around shoring up these towering and teetering compositional blocks with improvised bridges is astonishing. Soft Machine's rehabilitated reputation is largely founded on this pair of releases.

KEVIN AYERS

JOY OF A TOY

CDE 5027152 CD 1969

DAVE ALLEN

BANANA MOON

CAROUSEL C1012 CD 1971

These early solo albums by two founder members underline how a long and happy life in Soft Machine wasn't on the cards for either of them. On Ayers's irrepressible debut Joy Of A Toy, the first of a great trilogy that included Shooting At The Moon and Whateverhappenedswings, Wyatt drums on most tracks and both Hugh Hopper and Mike Rutledge contribute; but it's in no way a cloned Soft Machine album. Ayers's songs are beautifully arranged throughout by pianist/composer David Bedford, with Paul Buckmaster on cello, Paul Minns on oboe and Jeff Clyne on double bass. The album's hazily surreal pastoralism veils Ayers's deeper interest in articulating his Gurdjieff-inspired attempts to awaken humankind from its slumber. Well, this was 1970 and Ayers wasn't the type to take umbrage if everyone snuggled through the message. For Shooting At The Moon, Ayers put together a rambunctious improvising group to rattle the symmetry of the earlier album's arrangements. His group The Whole World turned around Bedford, Lol Coxhill on saxes and zophophones, Mike Oldfield on bass and guitar and Mick Fischer on drums. His earlier jazz influence resurfaces in his idiosyncratic see-sawing rock improvisations to terrorist fans of his sweetest songs, like the charming opener, "May It".

David Allen's solo debut Banana Moon is simpler but no less inspired. Wyatt is again present on drums, and now Allen's lead guitar is a little more accomplished. You can tell how far he's come by contrasting this album's version of Hugh Hopper's "Memories", also featuring a poignant Wyatt vocal, with the same song on Jet Projected Photographs. Now taking it at a slower pace, Allen brings out an elegiac quality beyond the young, blushing Soft Machine's reach. All the other songs are Allen's own.

SOFT MACHINE

FOURTH/FIFTH

COLUMBIA 4935412 CD 1971 & 1972

VIRTUALLY

COLUMBIA RUM110 CO 1971/1992

Fourth is Wyatt's last outing with the group he founded and squared through their difficult years. It's no coincidence that it is The Softs' most overtly jazz album. You can put this down to Elton Dean's growing influence, and it's his exuberant playing that largely determines the character of the album, even though, like Rutledge, only contributes one composition, compared with Hopper's pair: the side-long "Virtually"



Clockwise from top: Soft Machine (Kevin Ayers, Robert Wyatt, Mike Ratledge and David Alkin) in Dulwich Park; Wyatt and Ratledge joined by Hugh Hopper, 1975, at St Katherine's Dock; two shots of recording at Olympic Studios, February 1967



Matching Mole (top and centre), with Bill McCormick on bass; Nucleus with (left) Ian Carr. Opposite page: Piskeys frolic with Rattledge and Ayers at the South London house where Soft Machine resided in early 1967

suite and "Kings And Queens". Again, Chang, Evans and Hastings fill in brass ensemble interjections, and this time they're joined by the tenor sax of Alan Skidmore. In Fourth's overall balance represents a step forward from Third, with Rattledge's electric piano much in evidence, it's not immediately clear exactly what they gained with that advance. For all the brass frontline's free bluster, it's Hopper's compositional lyricism that shines through this album. Wyatt might have been muted, but his drumming is simply sublime throughout. Even so, the album's momentum is all but severed from the group's psychedelic rock roots. For the first time, The Softs sound less themselves and more like Keith Tippett's group, Jazz now prevails.

Fifth is hinged around the two drummers who were auditioned for Wyatt's vacant chair. Phil Howard and John Marshall got a side each on the original vinyl LP, and the music correspondingly vacillates between their opposing styles. Roy Babington is once again in evidence on double bass. Howard is an incredibly exciting drummer with free music propensities, who proved much in his shortlived tenure. Sadly, he wastes his energies driving the group into a free Improv corner that no one else particularly wishes to inhabit. John Marshall, on the other hand, is a more precise timekeeper. His side of Fifth is altogether more disciplined and less spinned.

Virtually is a pristine recording from the vaults of Radio Bremen that captures the classic Wyatt-Rattledge-Hopper-Dean quartet in its final stages. It offers live renditions of "Tooth", "Kings And Queens" and a truncated "Virtually". More intriguing are the early versions of "All White" and "Pigling Bland" (from Fifth), which suggest how that album might have turned out had Wyatt stayed on. But by this point the group's internal power struggles have resolved themselves in Rattledge's favour, and though Wyatt sings, the set is curiously introverted, as if the group are playing it as a private rite of passage sounding an elegy for their own doomed youth. Under the shadow of such compositely subtlety, Dean's freebowing tendency has also been brought in for questioning.

ELTON DEAN

JUST US

CUNEIFORM RUNE100 CD 1971

He was ousted soon enough, Dean's recently reissued solo debut provides clear evidence of his indomitable free spirit. Here, the emphasis is on fiery improvisation over Phil Howard's railing polyrhythms of a kind that no longer fitted Soft Machine's masterpiece. Dean augments his core trio of trumpet, Chang, bassist Neville Whittlehead and Howard with contributions from Mike Rattledge and future Softs bassist Roy Babington on two tracks. Further, Just Us reproduces Soft Machine's "Neo-Caribbean Groove" in a set otherwise spontaneously composed in the studio. Refining such spontaneity, his playing throughout is exemplary.

NUCLEUS

ELASTIC ROCK/

WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT LATER

NUGO BG00047 CD 1970

HUX HUX009 CD 1971 8075008

LIVE IN BREMEN

CUNEIFORM RUNE131/74 CD 1971/2000

Trumpeter and Miles Davis biographer Ian Carr formed Nucleus with the intention of electrifying jazz-rock, and Elastic Rock more than fulfils his sonic vision. Carr's cool, muted trumpet and mellow flugelhorn combine with the meandering soprano of Kari Jenkins, who also plays electric piano to great effect, and Brian Smith's tenor. Their unison playing is dramatically offset by the tension created by guitarist Chris Spedding. Driven by



the outstanding rhythm section of Marshall and Clyne, their impact is as immediate as rock.

Spedding's "slack" style of elongating chords and phrases made him a much sought-after session player, but he still constituted part of the stable line-up that recorded its successor the following year, *We'll Talk About It Later* consolidates the group's pole position in jazz-rock. Nucleus's approach to fusion is cooler than Soft Machine's, and their more sophisticated arrangements are directed towards ensemble unity. At this stage, that ambition doesn't inhibit their ability to rock, however, and Spedding even adds a certain funkiness. But it's Ceri's clarion brass that directs Nucleus's forward momentum, leaving Jenkins and Spedding to alternate spiky interjections of guitar and electric piano behind his and Smith's precision solos.

Recorded in 1971 for BBC's Jazz London, Hux's radio set reveals Nucleus weren't the kind of guys to let it all hang out live. On the double *Live In Bremen*, Spedding is replaced by guitarist Ray Russell for a set drawn from their first three albums.

MATCHING MOLE

MATCHING MOLE

COLUMBIA 464812 CD 1972

MATCHING MOLE'S LITTLE RED RECORD

COLUMBIA 464812CD 1972

SMOKE SIGNALS

CUNEFORM RUM101 CD 2001

MARCH

CUNEFORM RUM102 CD 1975/2001

Matching Mole was a Robert Wyatt solo project until CBS pressed him to form a group to promote it. Named by distorting the French for "Soft Machine" ("Machine Mole"), and made up of old Canterbury mates David Sclater (keyboards) and Phil Miller (guitar), plus Bill McCormick (bass), Matching Mole weren't about to interfere with Wyatt's original intention to record "an album of love songs". Much of it largely features his melancholy musings at the melatonin he found in the studio. He stretches that instrument's limbering tonalities over skeletal piano to utterly disarming effect on the poignant "O Caroline", where he steps out of the frame to describe his new group in the act of recording the broken love song he's now singing. Hemmed in with his multi-tracked harmonies, the piano song "Signed Curtain" finds him intoning: "This is the first verse", etc., as he slowly works his way through the template of a pop song to the devastating last line, when he admits to the futility of attempting to communicate his feelings in words. Thereafter, Matching Mole quickly developed into an eccentrically effective Improvising group headed by guitarist Phil Miller's relatively mood-sensitive "Part Of The Dance".

Unhappy with Mole's change of direction, Sinclair jumped ship, and was replaced by former Nucleus electric pianist Dave McRae on their second album, *Little Red Record*. With its daff skits and goony satire framing tracks as great as "God Song" and their increasingly assured rock improv, the album is as funny and inspired as early Soft Machine. Somewhat ironically, the two live CDs compiled from the group's 1972 and 73 US and European tours reveal Wyatt's increasing reluctance to sing. Now shaping up around McRae's jamming vehicles, Matching Mole's rock improv orientation might well corroborate Wyatt's statement, "I was happiest in Soft Machine when it was an all electric trio – after that it wasn't quite my dream band anymore." Though they strike a few sparks, whatever energy they muster is sunk into the group's losing struggle with its growing sense of entropy. Unsurprisingly, Wyatt dissolved the group and was in the act of forming a third line-up when he fell out of a window at a party, a tragedy which left him permanently confined to a



PHOTO: RICHARD DODD; MUSIC: MARK ELSTAD/RED EYE

wheelchair. The accident prompted Wyatt to embark on his ongoing quest to construct one of contemporary music's most affecting and idiosyncratic songbooks, on a string of releases which has continued up to 1997's *Sheep*.

SOFT MACHINE

SIX

COLUMBIA 464812 CD 1972

In keeping with their by now established ratio of a major line-up change per album, on Six Elton Dean has been replaced by Nucleus's Karl Jenkins. Originally a double LP, Six has some very fine moments, but it's a long way from the original group's sensibilities. A virtuoso obce player, Jenkins also plays baritone and soprano sax and electric piano. The first half of the album was recorded live in Brighton and Guildford, with Ratiedge and Jenkins sharing composing honours with John Marshall's "5 From 13 (For Phil Seaman With Love & Thanks)".

Unsurprisingly, given the presence of Jenkins and Marshall, some tracks bear Nucleus's hallmark accented rock riffing. On its original release, Six drew criticism that the group were now prone to rambling, and that they had lost their essential spirit. Such remarks evidence a partial deafness to the careful pattern building of the Marshall/Hopper rhythm section. They consolidate these new compositions' reliance on overlapping structures, which recall the systemics musics of Philip Glass and Steve Reich. Yet this quartet haven't entirely lost their urge to improvise. They may no longer appeal to the rock-based contingent of Soft Machine's fanbase, but its jazz aficionados go home satisfied. By this time, the numbers were running out for Ratiedge, The Softs' last surviving original member. He shuffled and sulked through the desultory Seven and Bundles and then quit.

KEITH TIPPETT'S CENTIPEDE

SEPTEMBER ENERGY

DISCONORME GSC1065 CD 1977

The inspired insanity of Tippett's September Energy is arguably the peak of the jazz-rock collisions Soft Machine set in motion back in the mid-60s. To realise the work, Tippett created the 50 piece organism Centipede, whose sections move independently yet attain unstoppable momentum and keen direction. Lord knows what possessed him to assemble such a beast; it took a musician/producer with the marshalling skills of Robert Fripp to help him tame it on record. "When I formed Centipede," wrote Tippett, "I wanted to enfold all the friends that I knew as much as possible, from the classical world, to the jazz world, the jazz-rock world, and the rock/rock world." Naturally, it embraces all and none of these genres simultaneously.

HUGH HOPPER

1984

CUNEFORM RUM104 CD 1973

Hopper's first solo album is a musical realisation of the visionary George Orwell novel from which it takes its name. Partly responding to The Softs becoming "a rather ordinary British jazz-rock outfit", Hopper revisited his early 1960s tape-loop experiments with David Allen in Paris to recover his creative curiosity. In the event, he adapted the tape-loop method itself as the shaping metaphor of his musical realisation of the totalitarian condition Orwell describes, interspersing darkly brilliant loop pieces with short funk rock interludes that conjure the exhilarating taste of freedom attained in the act of resistance. These passages are delivered by a group including John Marshall, Lol Coxhill and Nick Evans. Having tested freedom, Hopper soon made his escape from a group that now frowned on uninhibited creativity. □

Charts

Playlists from the outer limits

Slow Sound 15

- Finnish**
Field Recordings 1985-2002 (Tzadik)
Dance/Marcella
Cantinho Veloso
Folia & Iberia (Vine Real)
Hardcore
Guns And Peacock (Punk Up!)
Deathrock/Burgoes
Northumb Transfomer (Rune Grammofon)
Disco/Downtempo/Possibilities
Deep Listening (Nove Albae)
Post-rock
Secret Stringer (Bleu)
Prattle Lovers
Fresh (Black Leaf)
Industrial
Macs And Instruments (Music)
Mutants/People Like Us/Wallbangers
White Ops Spotted (Datass.net MP3s)
Punk/Alternative/Hardcore/ISD/Ind/Cosplay
Cosplay
Pis Bone Publica (Metalass Ron)

- Doomsday/Costello**
Together Is The New Alone (Milk! Plateau)
Guitar
Earthling (Guitar)
Mass, Lipid
Unire (IDC 46)

- Experimental**
Surveillance 6 (Rune Grammofon)
Stephan Mathieu
The Sad Miss Live At Music! (12k.com/termi NPS)

Compiled by Slow Sound Systems,
info@slowandslow.net, www.slowandslow.net

We welcome charts from record shops, radio shows, clubs, DJs, labels, musicians, readers, etc. Email: charts@house.co.uk

Some drawers storage boxes housing Meierhofer Kepfer's mensuraria (Open page 2)

EXOTICA 2

STAMMTHEMER

CTL 1 WEI AKTE 1 TER STROM 1

URGIEN 1

1 CHORDS

LELUJAH 1

Advanced D&D 15

- Various CD-R Demos:** DJ Shlomo, Dev/Nell, Duran Duran, Duran, Barrey, Sheer, DJ 100,000,cc, Hard Off!, ELO, Denovvey (Ur4), Soft Pink Truth: Do You Party? (Soundcheck), Electric Kettle, Faded Ceremony Anti Ultra Disciple (Peace 00), **Prince**, Purple Rain (Purple Punk), **Weather Seers**, Subliminal Synthesizer Response!, **Deathcult**, Stratosphere (Anita), **Pink Floyd**, Dark Side Of The Moon (EMI), Logan's Run: Original Soundtrack (Epic State Mastering), **Coldplay**, Parachute (All National), **The Beatles**, Abbey Road (Capitol), **Trade And Distribution Almanac**, volume 1 (Admiral0), **Vybration**, The Great Rabbis Audio (G2G Productions), **Various**, Love, Peace And Poetry: Brazilian Psychedelic Music (Innervate), **Fan Club Orchestra**, Sun Ra And The Fan Club Orchestra Vols 1 & 2 (String)

Compiled by Dennis Summer via Jazza Forum, Advanced D&D, WFMU 91.1 FM [www.wfmu.org], Thursdays 2-6 am

Anticopic 15

- Bruce Gilbert**, This Way (Mail), **Ziggy Marley**, Ziggy Marley, **Various**, Unconscious Conscious (Metaland), **Steve Roden**, Restaurant Dishes (Drente acoustic), **Tony Conrad**, From The Elements (Table Of The Elements), **Wolf Eyes**, Dead Hills (Toussaints Unlimited), **Thom Yorke**, Tomorrow (My Man), **Liesel Mattheski**, Toon De Hout (Pelerin 01 602) (Metaland), **This Heat**, Low (Metaland 1980 (re-lab)), **Steve Ambachts**, Mort Aux Volcans: Song Of Separation (Staalplaat), **Maya Haze**, Voice Of The Generations, **Terri Thewlis**, Lovewitch (Milk! Plateau), **William Goldsmith**, The Big Book (Walter Kotik), **Tubby York**, Death To The Tap 1979-1979 (Blood And Fire), **Startriders**, In The Beginning (DBK Works), **Luc Fenaert**, Far West News (Presented live at the Kitchen, NYC, 13 March 2000)

Compiled by Arthur, PO Box 1186, New York, NY 10278-1186, USA, info@vadelpo.com, www.vadelpo.com

The Office Ambience

- Various**, Flowers In The Wind: Women In Early Country Music 1929-1938 (Shade 01), **Mr. And Mrs. Gullane Driven By The School Yard (A Tree Shady) (Plays)**, **The Main Band**, Back To The Future (KTP), **Rox Music**, Requiem For Goliath (Tzadik), **Minor Threat**, Peel Dream Days (Deschall), **Sugarcubes**, We Can Fix It Remakes (Vertical Force), **Ratatat**, Social (Domino Recordings (Domino)), **Various**, The Age Of Old Age Of Old Age (Sting), **Nephews Modulations System**, Who Is There O Land Where King Is A Child (Sky Day), **Beach Boys**, Pet Sounds (Polydor), **Paul Simon**, Politics Of The Business (Analogue), **Arthur Doyle/Takashi Miyanishi/Satoru Toyozumi**, Love Connection 1987 (Shade), **Wax Dahlia & David Peja**, Sketch OST (Big Bag), **Noctalgia**, Turning It Down Since 2001 (Etc!), **Castane**, Democracy Two (Pleasure), **David Sylvian**, Live In Helsinki (Sirene/Sirene)

Compiled by The Wim Sound System

MATCH 3

QUIRINUS' LIEBE 1

KANTRIMIUSIK 2

SERENADE 1 EINE BRISE 1

AUS DEUTSCHLAND 2

40

SONANT 2 ACUSTICA 1

41

10 MÄRSCHE 2 DER TRIBUN 1

42

ORCHESTRION-STRÄTET DO ME LSEYTTET

37

38

39

43

ALS DEM SACHLAB 1

KOMMENTAR UND EXTE

Reviews



M Ward reviewed in Soundcheck

Soundcheck A-Z

Akatombo 59
Dorothy Ashby 59
Robert Ashley 59
Glenn Branca 59
Rob Burge 61
Burnt Sugar 61
The Celestial Communication Orchestra 61
The Chap 61
The Cramps 63
Doyle/Mizutani/Toyozumi 63
Dysrhythmia 63
Farmers Manual 60
Fischer/Stangassinger/Schweiger 63
Henry Grimes Trio 64
Michael Harrison 64
Hugh Hopper 64
Utah Kawasaki 64
Rahsaan Roland Kirk 64
Mark Lockett 65
Frank Lowe 65
Mass 65
Millsart 66
Molasses 66
Monobox 66
Günter Müller & Otomo Yoshihide 66
Max Neuhaus/John Cage 66
Phill Niblock 66
Bengt Frippe Nordström 67
Victor Nubla 71
Nucleus 67
Frank Pahl 67
Charlemagne Palestine 67
Po/Gypt Gore/Burns, Calioa & Howard/
Balai Mécanique 68
Prince Paul 69
Riley/Tilbury/Tippett 69
Keith Rowe & John Tilbury 69
The Wally Shoup Trio 69
Shoup/Flehardt/Moore/Corsano 69
Stuff Smith 69
DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid 71
David Sylvian 58
Natsuki Tamura Quartet 71
Tibetan Red/Victor Nubla 71
Terre Thaemitz 71
Tomahawk 73
Winston Tong 73
Christian Wallumrød 73
M Ward 73

Columns

Size Matters 68
The Compiler 70
The Boomerang 72
Avant Rock 74
Critical Beats 75
Dub 76
Electronica 77
Global 78
HipHop 79
Jazz & Improv 80
Outer Limits 81

Print Run 82

All Music Guide To Jazz
Edited by Vladimir Bogdanov, Chris Woodstra & Stephen Thomas Erlewine
The Devil's Son-In-Law: The Story Of Pee Wee Wheatstraw And His Songs
By Paul Garon
The Second Sense: Language, Music And Hearing
By Robin Maconie

The Inner Sleeve 84

Kim Hiorthøy purrs over Cat Power's LP artwork

Cross Platform 85

Ken Hollings takes a dive into **Semiconductor**'s virtual earthquakes and digital cities. In review: Miles Davis and Gr Scott-Heron on DVD; Experience Music Project's Pop Music Conference; and NYC's Vectora exhibition, surveying ten years of digital art. Plus Go To: our monthly Net travel

On Location 88

All Tomorrow's Parties UK
Camber Sands, UK
Sonic Youth: Stan Brakhage Memorial Benefit
New York, USA
Archipel
Genève, Switzerland
X-tract Sculpture Musicale: Dialogues Between Music And Art
Berlin, Germany
Wire: flag burning
London, UK
Freedom Of The City
London, UK
Godspeed You! Black Emperor + Jackie O Motherfucker
Québec & Montréal, Canada

Soundcheck

This month's selected CDs, vinyl and singles

With contributions from Derek Bailey and Christian Fennesz, David Sylvian's new record is his most adventurous departure yet. By David Toop

DAVID SYLVIAN

BLEMISH

SANADHI SOUND BOUNDCD85001 CD

The record begins in a room, so begins as a record. Not so many recordings begin in rooms at this moment in time; they are not records so much as accumulations of data. Distinctive fluctuations of a tube amp, vibrato set to medium speed and high intensity, introduce us into the room space and its atmosphere. No guitars, filtering or intrusive EQ; just the bass singing to itself. No pizzicato notes; just percussive impact now and then. Another guitar, further distant in the room, erupts in arrested distortion, clipped. The amplifiers speak, or the body of the guitar; frame work rather than systemic framework. "I fall outside of her," David Sylvian sings.

The less "real" silence (the room before and after music happens) surrounding recorded music, the more interesting real silence becomes. We call this atmosphere, the traces of life that we humans know very little about. Rooms and their resonance become magical. In the pauses between words, brief moments of difference tones, a low frequency bulge in the fabric. "Place the dummy on the roof, stetch him a tongue, give him proof." Every sound is close now, or very close: the voice, small blemishes of noise, amp vibrato, a drifting, wavering tone, tiny references of digital environments. Nothing is covered, removed, detached, enhanced. The voice is a naked man, seated in a room unadorned except by tremulous, broken sound waves. The room is an ear.

Track two, "The Good Son", begins in another room. "... Vocals," says Derek Bailey, "OK." Nowhere in the index of any book of theory, his chords and intervals move in wayward lines, water channels through marshland, a logo that is. A musical timing and tuning, nevertheless. Feedback conversation between another guitar and amp hangs at the back of the room. Another kind of line, a shadow of the first. "You know he'll take you but not too far," sings David Sylvian. "Always first in line but second to none, the good son." The match is cracked, uncomfortable, a

voice looking for the logic of water in marsh, deep inside the listener's physical discomfort zone. Stripped of soundbite and spin, smooth oiled reassurances, the dialogue makes no concessions to empathy yet unearthly a communication. Can we agree that our understanding is fragile and partial, stop pretending that we all want to sing the same song?

Track three, "The Only Daughter", words are chopped, snipped, lost, doubted: "She was, she was, a friend of mine, do us a favour, your one and only warning, please be gone by morning." A faint crackle, distant tones floating in a master landscape, cuts in the fabric, harsh notes of the way we behave, the room has gone.

Track four, "The Heart Knows Best", pulses, a measured tread on soft ground; an open guitar chord shudders, vibrato turned to slow. The instrument is stuck, not plucked. "And the mind's devise, but the heart knows better." Is it ever possible to know what these songs mean? Private scenes in rooms, family life, soul adult, ruptures and momentary connections, some faint scent of a breakthrough in personal understanding, how blurred feelings and the lapses of self interlace with clear perception and our sense of the real. "As frequent as street corners in Hobart are these chasms in the continuity of our ways," wrote Virginia Woolf in *Jacob's Room*.

Track five, "She Is Not", resumes the dialogue, a library scene of two philosophers from different schools in search of a common text. Bailey's guitar is spikes piercing the surrounding air. "There she is, among her children, full of paintings." Only 43 seconds, this engagement, like a line written in a notebook.

Track six, "Late Night Shopping", is home video contrast, a Don DeLillo mood moving suddenly out of doors into artificial light, inside a car, nocturnal scenes from a mail, though no journey beyond the room takes place, just the thought of the experience proposed. A mundane chore becomes perverse; the world is Inside out. A double-tracked voice, handclaps, a three note baseline, whereby the materials come closest to customary recording studio procedures. In the empty spaces, creaks and squeaks that speak the language

of trees in a high wind. "We can take the car, no one will be watching, we can lose ourselves, late night shopping."

Track seven, "How Little We Need To Be Happy", is a third study, how to build song from the non-linear, non-cyclical form of Derek Bailey's improvisations. The voice is conversational, confident within itself yet deeply uncomfortable in this room of shifting floor and window walls. "They removed his voice and the silence overwhelmed him. How little it takes." Thanks to my own conversation with the artist Russell Mills (Sylvian's longtime collaborator), I have a quote, from Susan Sontag: "All art should make us nervous." Bailey is more fulsome, less dry here. Finding a shape for the words is so difficult, sniffling a harmonic implication out of blunted chords that shuffle in line, old men for a few steps, then shatter in mirror shards as if suddenly angels. No endings, no beginnings, no bridges, just river.

Track eight, "A Fire In The Forest", is the last of this 43/45" record. A record of a point when caution is a paper boat to be thrown into the sea. Beginning with sustained tones, the improvisations of a church organist clouding the empty air just before a funeral unleashes its overwhelming emotions, this could be a song about death and bliss. "There is always sunshine above the grey sky, I will try to find it, yes I will try." This is a song of voices that become choruses. Two chords at a dreaming pace only but such a deep mood of human fellowship, transcendence, optimism and resolve. At the beginning of the second, or first verse, the sun bursts. A Christian Fennesz arrangement gently underlines the melancholy of ecstasy, sounds from his computer stretched into fine strings that nudge memories of childhood foods. Toffee and melted cheese. "Oh here comes my childhood, a penny for your secrets, it's standing in the window, not out here where it belongs." Too short, too sad, giving up a meaning only reluctantly, the song demands to be played over and over, moving beyond all expectations. Voice sniffling a skin. □



AKATOMBO**TRACE ELEMENTS**

SWINN WHEAT CD

BY TOM RIDGE

An expansive Soot living in Hiroshima, Paul Krik's approach to soundtrackng his environment is powerful if none too subtle. Essentially he provides a foundation of distorted beats and deep bass over which he layers static debris, voice and noise samples and swaths of violent electric guitar. Thematically, he embodies the clichés associated with themes of urban chaos, alienation and culture shock. His music stubbornly forges ahead through a bubble of sampled voices and noises.

For all its relentless, mechanised motion, the dynamics of *Trace Elements*, released on Cole Newman's Swin label, are more rock than electronic. For the most part, it's all fleshily overdriven, "Dry-Loop" and "Humed" bury traces of John Barry-style melodrama, in distortion and volume, immersing them in delirious, bludgeoning monotony. Presumably the title's meant to be ironic, because "Inscrutable" sounds anything but, the only element of impenetrability here being its unyielding momentum, loping rhythms and samples leave the bass-driven "Overheat" and "Bad Cop", but they still make contact at a very visceral level. The more metallic edge of "Guitar" is meditated with oscillating noises and a more subtle deployment of light and shade. "Ponderlust" is a jinggler of percussive and noise samples. The music finally escapes from its earthbound gravitational pull, as the antithetic distortion zones of "Twisted" subside into the subtle soundwaves of "Panaceas". It's a neat enough ending, if a little incongruous after all that has gone before.

DOROTHY ASHBY**AFRO-HARPING**

VITAL SWISS CD

BY DAVID CRIBBLE

Although not as exploratory or avant-garde as Alice Coltrane, harpist Dorothy Ashby nonetheless exerted a significant influence on her back in the days when they both worked the Detroit jazz circuit together. Ashby understood that the groove yet unwieldy instrument could play a role in jazz, especially when it entered its cooler phase. As she said, "The harp has a clean voice with a resonance and sympathetic that turn familiar jazz phrasings inside out."

However it was only in the 1960s, when she came under the wing of Richard Evans, a former

journeyman bassist turned arranger for Cadet Records, that she really got the chance to present her already much-honed virtuosity to a wider audience. 1968's Afro-Harping has been out for grint many years, with copies changing hands for an exorbitant £100. Small wonder. It's a richly rewarding, highly accessible collection, a hymn to exquisitely scored soul, jazz and funk arrangements over which Ashby's playing bass like an open broad. She plays far off and ahead of the rhythm, ghosting the groove.

The effect is unorthodox but instantly pleasing, like a jazz equivalent of Debussy's Danse Sacré Et Profane. Tracks like the opener, the Latin-panned, threnody-blasted "Send vibration" feel emblematic of the times, suggestive of that urban composer Neil Hefti in their fragrance (this "Lonely Girl" is covered here) and the stony awwa of San Rio's big band arrangements. Evans, incidentally, played with Ra in his early career.

Among the high points are the title track, where Ashby dialogues with Chicago guitarist Paul Upchurch, and "Gemes", where she gives full vent to her lyrical muse. Only the final track, a cover of Bacharach-David's "The Look Of Love" doesn't quite work, feeling more like a sop to popular than a clever reworking of a standard. Although further recordings with Evans followed, including 1970's more exotic *Exotic Rubeybe* or Dorothy Ashby, she never quite regained the authentik voice she established on Afro-Harping. Ashby died out the remainder of her career up to her death in 1986 in prestige session work with the likes of Stevie Wonder (on "It's Magic") from Songs In The Key Of Life), Earth, Wind & Fire and Barry Manilow. With Afro-Harping, however, she fleetingly achieved neoclassic perfection.

ROBERT ASHLEY**THE WOLFMAN**

ALGA MARGARETHA PLATEA, A CONTINUUM CD

BY BRIAN MORTON

The first significant release by American composer Robert Ashley since 2000's *Ost*, which featured John Le Bedard and regular accompanist Blue Gene Tyranny. The Wolfman catches the younger Ashley at his shapeshifting, lycaesthetic best. These four tape pieces from 1957, 1960 and 1964 are among the works described by Tyranny as "social behaviour and language illusion studies".

The Fox is an example of warped Americana. Drawn from Bert Kwouk's curiously animal folk

song, its musical component is constituted from a series of piano clusters played both forwards and back, but with the attacks edited out. The narrator, delivered in Ashley's typical "Water Oozeke or Quakelose" drawl, was recorded in a single live pass in a home studio. Crude, then, but undeniably effective, and certainly more accessible than the somewhat later *The Wolfman*, which was written at the request of Morton Feldman when he couldn't fulfil a commission for a vocal piece. Premiered in 1964 at a avant-garde music Charlotte Moorman's festival of new arts in New York, the piece extensively explores feedback. Not just the colour ratio squats that define a part of rock music a few years later, but full-room feedback of a sort that helps structure the whole sonic experience.

The Wolfman Tape is an association work. It uses tape-speed manipulation and elements of "found sound" derived from AM radio, creating a strange cocktail party effect that serves as a dress for the vocal performance. Added to that is a coda offering an abstract commentary on what just preceded it. To jazz fans of a certain cast, it may be more fitting as a stark environment for a Bob James ESP recording.

Made somewhat earlier, The Battlemente is the most obviously studious of social behaviour. Coming from the same desolate landscape as Ashley's television opera *Perfect Lives*, it was conceived as a soundtrack for George Marshall's film about a latter who wanders shopping malls searching for empties with a five cent return value. Again, Ashley does strongly on American radio culture, basing his 40 minute wordless monologue on the open circuit hum of 60 Hertz.

These are important additions to the Ashley canon, and further evidence that Ann Arbor, Michigan, milled New York City and the West Coast as an important centre for the 60s avant-garde. Ashley's own health warning — The Wolfman is potentially injurious to the hearing — comes as standard.

GLENN BRANCA**THE ASCENSION**

ADUDE ACTRESS CD

BY DAVID KEEGAN

Originally released in 1981 on 98 Records, Glenn Branca's *The Ascension* provides a fantastic snapshot of a titanic moment in the history of New York's downtown music. It represents the first attempt to rebuild on ground previously levelled by No Wave groups Mars, Teenage Jesus & The Jerks, Red Transistor and

Branca's own *The Sonic And The Theoretical Girls*. No Wave was primarily fuelled by profound acts of reversal and subtraction, where any overt notions of melody, form and relationship were stripped out in favour of a more elemental and emotionally direct attack. All substance and no style. No Wave made expressive use of volume and rhythm, with barbed monosyllabic words reducing language to primal phonetics. Yet despite No Wave's aggressively instigator stance, most of its players were more self-consciously than first wave punks, their assault on form more deliberate than instated. No Wave was a signal moment in that it represented a deliberate attempt to fade volatile elements from various avant-garde disciplines with rock aesthetics and a post-punk DIY ethos.

Guitarist and composer Glenn Branca was one of the first of this group of players to fully articulate this beat poetry. In No Wave's unassessed corner, he'd created a new kind of minimalism, one that had more to do with the claustrophobic street noise edging around the squeaking sound sources of downtown than the mordant headcases of Terry Riley's *A Rainbow In Curved Air*. For the Ascension, Branca stuck to the jangling rhythms and studiously artless drowsiness that characterised No Wave, but added fanned guitars, some with multiple string tunings, to the same note. Branca and his regular group — guitarists Lee Ranaldo, Ned Sublette, David Rosenthal, bassist Jeffry Green and drummer Stephan Wachsmuth — work through the implications of this approach, still a rock group but now boasting an orchestral reach. Tracks like "No 2" and "The Spectacular Commodity" anticipate groups like Sonic Youth (Thurston Moore also passed through Branca's ranks), Swans and Savage Republic, but the title track, a 13 minute instrumental speaking in tongues unknown — remains invisible.

Between them the four guitarists generate an unearthly torrent, nailing through a series of metallic plateaus that dissolve like breath with the sudden shift of a chord. In the slatternies Lee Ranaldo bemoans the fact that the guitars were close miked in the studio, claiming that the lack of room tone lessens the recording of the kind of power they were able to channel when agitating the volume of air in a concert hall or club; but it's precisely the music's unyielding quality and eye-level fury that masks the Ascension set as something else entirely. Call it a Heavy Metal symphony, punk rock minimalism, avant-garde, whatever you want. It's a beautiful noise.





Giving you morph for your money! Farmers Manual

FARMERS MANUAL

RLA

MESSO 777 DVD VIDEOROM

Here they are, then, the group once described as the original digital boy band, purveyors of pop music for the year 4000. Heard and seen up close, though, in this digest of live archive, Farmers Manual look to come from a rather older place and a broader intellectual tradition. So scroll the calendar back a moment from that optimistic fifth millennium puff. In 1894, Joseph Breuer was falling out with Sigmund Freud over his views on infantile sexuality, arguably the key moment in the evolution of psychoanalysis. Exactly 100 years later, in Freud's own city, Farmer's Manual came to life, "unconsciously" of course.

Official constitution followed a year later. Membership is fluid to the extent that local collaboration has always been critical, but the basic line-up remains the same: Matthias Graach, Stefan Possert, Oswald Berndt and later Eugen Denenger and Gert Bränter. In place of the usual five white boys with guitars routine, their schtick is a form of extreme conceptual derangement, "played" on an array of Powerbooks. Some of the philosophy seems to come from Iannis Xenakis's mixed-metaphor approach, music as a bulkwork of architecture, and the modern composer as a kind of cosmic pilot, scooting about in free space unhampered by instrumentality.

The Farmers Manual archive now stretches back almost a decade. In developmental terms, the group has remained determinedly locked in an infantile phase of language. What they do is what paediatricians and psycholinguists call jargoning, a patterned but essentially formless stream of articulation. It is music without musical rationale, but with a very definite end-function. In so far as the tirelessly touring group has a manifesto, it is the

radical transformation of "local atmosphere". A typical Farmers Manual performance, and there are now hundreds archived, represents, in their words, "a shift from dissolution and clamminess through manual change and ecstatic fiddling into an imaginative state of complex monotony, structured calm and chill, or endless associative babbling".

The soundworld alone – a relatively familiar grammar of smewave tones, waterdrops and distant, industrial crashes – is insufficient to explain what they are about. The DVD features extended footage of the members (I assume) ripping away plastic to reveal a recessed plank door covered in mattresses; the door is ripped away and then replaced; a black and white kitten squats anxiously. It is footage which delivers the same "complex monotony" as Dusan Makavejev's film about that other radical Viennese, Wilhelm Reich, called *WR: Mysteries Of The Organism*. The latter makes the same move from clamminess towards a weird kind of grace that one hears in the group's performances.

These are as hard to quantify and describe as a Nurse With Wound album, but where Steve Stapleton has a discernible roster of musical influences, Farmers Manual appear to have avoided even the faintest cod-pal anecdotes about where they come from. Their musical language has something of the quality of listening to a young child through a bedroom door and imagining that she has briefly and miraculously mastered Serbo-Croat or Navajo. This is what they mean by associative babbling, but where hypnosis might have provided the key to psychoanalysis, their conduit is portable computer technology. Laptops are educational toys and comforters by turns. The sounds produced and preserved on any of their LPs and EPs – like *No Backup* and the cleverly named *Does Not Compute* (both from 1996) – or indeed the three days and 21 hours' worth of sounds archived on this DVD

Brian Morton spends three days and 21 hours on the couch coming to terms with the Viennese laptoppers' audio archives housed on a single DVD

are less important than the conceptual context, which of course can't be reproduced. This is the same tired argument that says you shouldn't record and market free improvisation. Listening to Farmers Manual does effect a change in the "local atmosphere". It is both alienating and oddly reassuring, very much a work of dream logic rather than design.

It's probably cheap and unworthy to underline the group's Viennese roots and thence their complicity in one of the world's great intellectual sleights of hand, but their music does come across as a mischievous sidebar to the unfinished Freudian project. If the unconscious is also structured like a language, here is its singing voice. That said, what Farmers Manual do isn't subversive music, but has a normative and even therapeutic dimension which puts weight firmly on the domestic half of Xenakis's unresolved equation. This is very much a music of intoners and occupied spaces.

In broader terms, it is a perfect example of what the people at *Sylfingen* in Sweden, who have been sponsoring new forms and practices for 70 uncelebrated years now, call "unestablished art". This doesn't imply "anti-establishment", though it's easy to take that hint, but an art that resists finished form, I can't confidently say what I make of RLA as a document of that near decade of cheerfully arrested development. It's a confused and some respects unattractive digest of something altogether more free-flowing. In performance, I can tell you that Farmers Manual are a very different though no less enigmatic proposition. The music can attain thunderous intensity, though more often it concentrates on small and discernible sounds. Members have even been known to nod off on stage, which seems the perfect self-commentary: these are kids who still need the odd nap, and however far afield they go, do their best stuff wrapped up and quaffed in familiar things. ☐

ROB BURGER**LOST PHOTOGRAPH**

TZNDR 121797 CD

BY JOHN CRATCHLEY

Rob Burger is the keyboard and accordion player in the San Francisco-based Tin Hat Ho. For the first outing under his own name, he has swapped his usual partners for the mud in demand downtown duo of Greg Cohen on bass and Kenny Walker on vibes, drums and percussions. They provide a consistently intense drive throughout the album's showcase for Burger's varied keyboard forays.

He plays accordion, pump organ, piano, prepared and toy piano, celeste, glockenspiel, chamberlin, Hammond organ, music boxes and the intriguingly named manophone. Burger integrates these elements with a fine ear for textual nuance, revealing an innate ability to match mood with sound. The album's moods vary substantially, although the overall flavor is definitely Eastern European. At times unashamedly romantic, Burger's waltzes and pastiche charmers are distinguished by his perspicacity for music drama.

Much of the mood is brooding and all of it is delicately complex, bearing the hallmarks of his work with THT. But Cohen and Walker are equal partners in this project, driving Burger on to exhibit his outstanding virtuosity. He can derive great power from the ensemble, while elsewhere displaying a featherlight deftness of touch, much in the same vein as bandoneon player Dino Saluzzi. Burger produced the album too, and the integrity of his musical vision is evident in the attention he pays to sonic detail. Adding a prepared piano overlay, toy piano or a music box to the mix keeps things consistently interesting. Burger explores the characteristics of his more unusual instrumentation to great effect, precisely placing a pump organ's wheeez or a Casio's thin tones to shape and shade the music.

BURN'T SUGAR**THE RITES: CONDUCTIONS INSPIRED BY STRAVINSKY'S LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS**TRIQUOROID PROMO CD
BY STEPHEN ROBINSON

According to Greg Tait, founder, leader and conductor of this sprawlingly diverse Gothic-based ensemble, "Burnt Sugar is a territory band, a neo-tribal thing, a community hang, a society music guild aspiring to the condition of all that is motion, glacial, social, spatial, dancing,

mythic, anthropic and telepathic." On paper at least, Tait's got it just about right. His dense album of verbal allusions, associations and references is more than matched by their heavyweight credentials and, at its most engrossing, the music itself.

Formed in 1999 around the nucleus of Steve and Lawrence Buch Morris, the present Burnt Sugar line-up features no fewer than 18 musicians, including four guitars, three drummers, piano and cello. In addition, there's trumpeter Lewis Farnes, hornist Willmar Parker's O'Neill's Porth Group, and turntablist from Egyptian DJ Muhammed Ali. The album also lists special guests Melvin Gibbs and Peter Cosey, who between them boast an impressive CV ranging from Aphex/Portugese exiles Miles Davis to The Rollins Band, Deafheat and Andi Lindsay. In their own estimation, Burnt Sugar are a "contemporary version of Miles Davis's Jitches Band" with myriad references to a common thread linking Eddy Hearl, AR Kane, Sun Ra, Jimi Hendrix, etc.

The Rites is Burnt Sugar's third album, and its opening sales make it clear that they're getting closer to delivering on their genre-melding manifesto. Strings spring tautly from turntable glitches, dislocated vocal cords around guitar and piano, blending kaleidoscopically into a shifting miasma of textures undermined by a one-note double bass riff and larval drums. The subtle, "Conductions Inspired by Stravinsky's Le Sacre Du Printemps", refers to Buch Morris's system for directing orchestral improvisation. If the album falls short of the fiery or bombastic highs of Stravinsky's Rite, under Tait's guidance Burnt Sugar deploy their Stravinsky-derived themes with a subtlety approaching near-explosion. Their queer, impressionistic evocation of colors and textures are constantly engaging, self-fracturing and surprising, but the ensemble have a tendency to reach each of these passages into loose impromptu sections that recurrently fall into the same languid pace, despite the Frappé-like hellos elicited into them by Peter Cosey's guitar. This repeating pattern makes for an episodic, somewhat static album that's only really broken in the heavily Miles-inspired closing 17 minute worktop, where the conductor's seatless and layers finally find a convincing place amid the limbo. Right now, the album is caught between two imperatives: sprawl and intensify. With a bit more of both, Burnt Sugar may yet come to inhabit the hallowed space their references insinuate.

However, someone along the line ought to have taken the red pen to Matthew Goosbeck's somewhat self-indulgent yet, for Silvia, insufficiently analytical essay accompanying the set. This would have left up space for a brief synopsis of who's playing what when. With no fewer than seven saxophones, three trumpets, and three trombones involved, a few directions on how to differentiate Sabir Mateen from Kidd Jordan wouldn't have hurt. Instead, the

THE CELESTIAL COMMUNICATION ORCHESTRA**H.CONGRES.57/TREASURE BOX**

ETRÉMITE MTE2006-043-4XCD

BY DANI WILKINSON

These four discs document the entirety of Alan Shiu's 23 piece Celestial Communication Orchestra's two appearances on 24 and 27 May 2001 at the Utrecht Festival in Praeloewo, Switzerland. MCv.Als-57 references the resolution passed by the US Congress in 1987 that designated jazz as a "rare and valuable national American treasure" (see Alan Silva interview, The Wire 228). The test of that resolution forms the basis of five of the 14 extended tracks here. Praise goes to Shiu himself in the CD's disingenuous list of epic recordings, from the Xenakis-like density of 1969's *Luna Surface* and the following year's *The Seasons* (on BYG Actuel) through 1971's neglected masterpiece *My Country to the sweaty groove of 1982's *Desert Music**

In addition to the conundrum of the orchestra's snatched scores and hand gestures, Shiu guides the music's direction with a minimum of composed passages such as the arching Messiaen-esque melody of "Seen". That he can harness the collective force of so many strong-willed individuals – half of these cats are bandleaders in their own right – to create music of such heroic force and structural coherence is a testament to his theoretical rigour and charisma. And however dense things get, Shiu always manages to move himself neatly screaming out the shapes of rhythmic cells for the group to play like a coaxed Indian guru. But when he's controlling the action from his synthesizers, plugging in low notes that occasionally goading in the way of the other soloists, that quality is a rather mixed blessing. There are a few rough spots, but the overwhelming Warholian sweep of the music amply justifies Shiu's decision to release both concepts in their entirety.

However, someone along the line ought to have taken the red pen to Matthew Goosbeck's somewhat self-indulgent yet, for Silvia, insufficiently analytical essay accompanying the set. This would have left up space for a brief synopsis of who's playing what when. With no fewer than seven saxophones, three trumpets, and three trombones involved, a few directions on how to differentiate Sabir Mateen from Kidd Jordan wouldn't have hurt. Instead, the

introductions are left to vocalist Jerome Thomas, who on average takes about six minutes to namecheck all the performers. Hurling introductions bookend each concert, meaning that well over 20 minutes of music here is basically background jingling to accompany a rollcall of free jazz Hall of Fame. But, heavily influenced by the climactic delivery of The Sun Ra Arkestra's late, great June Tyson, Thomas's vocal deconstruction of the resolution itself is inspiring if a little overdone in places, with pianist Bobby Few's delicate arpeggiates providing punctuators and mud-needed harmonic clarifications.

Obtainable through the Everett Website, the four discs are also available in a limited edition of 385 "treasure boxes" signed and hand-numbered by Silvia herself. These might present a logistical nightmare for the label, but the treasured boxes handsomely complement Shiu's uncompromising artistic vision.

THE CHAP**THE HORSE**

TO RECORDINGS LTD CDLP

BY TOM RIDGE

The London based The Chap was originally conceived as Johannes Van Weiszacker's side-project to his other group, Karassew. With their debut album, they establish their own offset, but clearly defined identity. Encompassing electronic, distortion, a mixture of technologies and unpredictable juxtapositions of noise and melody, The Chap are certainly indebted to Kvaark. But a pervasive sense of the absurd distinguishes The Chap from their more earnest-sounding contemporaries and precursors. Their originality lies in their ability to make sudden leaps in style and tone, from doctored legato of electric and live sounds into distorted lyrics and a genuine sense of the bizarre; from clamped and still recognisable samples, pop, lined with little fits and eddies, to unpredictable combinations of pulse and dissonance.

Amid barages of distortion and lurching Tejano rhythms, they drop sudden flurries of jagged guitar peeling and dryly cloaked vocals – "Why not imperial? Jam up your Marshall". A Norman Whieldon string partage distinguishes "I Got Flattened By A Pig Stiff", and there's some Fred Frith-style guitar biting on "SBS1". Their self-selecting predilection for wearing so many influences on the outside makes it hard to pin down The Chap's frame of reference. But even as their sophistication requires them to

HOTEL-DU-PONT-AUD.

**Kevin Blechdom's "Bitches Without Brackets"**

a psycho-sexual delirious balloon-head with a laptop, a boyband, a bongo and songs from the heart, she thinks it's a good idea to have bad ideas.
This is her debut album from chick-a-snap records digipak-ed with 16 page booklet, gatefold sleeve vinyl in special 'out June 20th'
tinydollar online www.chickasnaprecords.com

**ANGIE REED PRESENTS THE BEST OF BARBARA BROCKHAUS**

feels, patric ostensi, host 20 + remakes • CD incl. 20 pages booklet + 2 bonus video clips • LP incl. poster, first 9000 in red vinyl

tinydollar contact: tinydollar@powerline-agency.com

CHICK-A-SNAP RECORDS

new dati politics 1-liners, hand made by the chick. now available @ www.sellout.chicksnaprecords.com / the place to buy all your favorite chick-a-snap releases and stuff! Oh! distributed by CTA / BRD



I hear you knocking: Keith Rowe (below) and John Tilbury (top)

KEITH ROWE & JOHN TILBURY DUOS FOR DORIS

ERSTWHILE 0002 2CD
This word – improvisation – no longer seems adequate to describe the forms that emerge from playing without a score or pre-determined structure. These categories are invidious anyway, but improvised music history, or that part that has its roots in communality and spontaneity, raises certain expectations in the listener that may have become anachronistic or simply naive. Take *Duos For Doris*, dedicated to Tilbury's mother, who died two days before this recording was made. A double CD containing three long pieces, this is the first duo release by Keith Rowe and John Tilbury, whose musical relationship goes back to a 1965 performance of Cornelius Cardew's *Treatise*.

Two thirds of the post-1963 AMM, Rowe and Tilbury share a profound understanding of the way in which form can emerge from carefully controlled dynamics. Some listeners may suspect a lack of communication or development, though they may be mistakes. For the first piece, over 70 minutes in length, a stable state develops quickly out of quietly fluctuating buzzing tones and a resonant, expectant hum, a conglomeration of brainwaves that immediately and imperceptibly induces the receptivity of deep listening. Tilbury's discrete interventions within the crumpling edges, paranormal knockings and beebeee mutter of this landscape inevitably evoke memories of

other musics – notably John Cage's works for prepared piano and the solo piano compositions of Morton Feldman.

What both players seem to have achieved is a distillation of their respective languages. Two prepared tones from Tilbury may evoke memories of Cage, yet they go beyond Cage, locating his reinvention of the piano in a contemporary context. As for Rowe, the majority of his sounds no longer have any connection to an identifiable instrument. Perhaps they stem from guitar; perhaps not. The question hardly matters. Physicality is evident – a sound that clearly marks the trajectory of a hand or the passing of some device over amplified or resonant surfaces – but the sound of guitar strings has gone.

What is so striking about these recordings is their sustained mood, vacillating somewhere between a calm through which fresh elements emerge as if growing out of the substratum, and a tension so extreme that any individual sound pierces this calm, whether piano pitch or guitar pick-up noise, shocks the air of the room. Nothing to do with the ears: the skin jumps; her stands on end. Tilbury's touch is exquisite, either a deep rumbling in the bass that detaches itself momentarily from any sense of human agency, or melodic fragments that float over the music like bell chimes reflecting from the surface of a lake.

A spellbinding atmosphere of restraint is developed, almost frustrated and frustrating in its feeling of withholding. This can be traced to the laminar

In a threnody for John Tilbury's dead mother, two titans of British free music bend the meaning of improvisation to breaking point with paranormal knockings and raging intensity. By David Toop

approach of AMM, dating back to the earliest sessions from the mid-1960s, but there is something unfamiliar, an intensity of concentration on detail, a virtuosity of enabling through which marks appear to emerge on paper rather than being written. When a kind of rage, or grief, collects and gains momentum, as happens 43 minutes into the first piece, the impact is overwhelming. Some distortion is evident in this passage, as Tilbury hammers obsessive chords from the piano and Rowe increases volume to the point of violence, though the technical flaw only adds to the intensity.

Of the two pieces on disc two (none of which have titles), the first begins with a recording of tropical insects and birds, the whiskered, whistling frequencies of a short wave radio broadcast and Tilbury's rattling, haphazard high notes. This seems the least focused section of the entire session, yet also a reminder of the two humans involved in the performance and a window out into the world beyond the studio. Within six minutes, an eerie suspended world of groans, knocks and feline pulsations has taken over, again fertile ground for beginning clusters of muted strings. At moments during the third track, very little is happening except for the piano sustain pedal and amplifier hiss. An ascending four note arpeggio from Tilbury, a thump from Rowe, a scratch, a scrape, even at the barest minimum, this is a record that grasps the attention and envelops it completely. □

appear semi-detached, they can't mask the intensity inherent in their music, which peaks in overloaded hysteria.

THE CRAMPS FIENDS OF DOPE ISLAND

VERSENDECK 4795 CD

BY RICHARD HENDERSON

With their first studio album in five years, The Cramps return true to their original instincts. *Fiends Of Dope Island* mites and emphasizes the unrhined and ferocious energy of rockabilly, upon which singer Lux Interior maps his signature fearsome: bad behaviour, worse intentions and can't feel enough to escape the cop. Firming his deviant impulses, Poison Ivy Rockash punch out guitar notes with little regard for codified distinctions between lead and rhythm playing.

Zealous record collectors, the Cramps have never hidden their sources of inspiration. Their favourite angles, found at yard sales and swap meets, were often the product of spartan technology and the artists' limited, though fully utilized, musical abilities. Ironically, the Cramps' own efforts for the most part have been tracked in state-of-the-art studios, and this is their best sounding record to date, due in no small measure to master Earl Palmer. Expanding upon the meticulous sound he helped craft for the Cramps' previous *Flamengo*, Monkey imbues these tracks with the cavernous miasma of 50s swamp rock. Slap-beat echo becomes a fifth member of the group, the membership of a drive-in's asphalt jerking tank. Lux embodies this echo with head consonants on the chorus of "Dr Lucifer," MD" and Posse by turns of fragmentation phrases with a nod to the possibilities inherent in the delayed sound.

The extended build and release of tension in the meaty "Dopefiend Boogie" is built from minimal, fairly Arabic-style bassed back and forth, guitar to bass, as the rhythmic section roars toward either a visiting piano or a brick wall. Never before have the group's performances meshed so tightly as they do here.

The Cramps deserve their idealized netherworldly status in greater detail with every album they release. Having to this agenda with unwavering dedication, they grant themselves license to lay on images of depravity over pulverizing music as thick as anyone can stand. Thankfully, restraint is in short supply throughout the 13 tracks here. When an arrangement stops on a dime, feedback leeks into the brief silences. Lux barks, screeches and exerts his audience to extremes of ill-considered behaviour with the intensity of a trout evangelist.

The cartoonish bent of *Friends Of Dope Island* is undeniable, but there is an honesty to its tragically sound. Every selection on this disc works at cross-purposes to conventional, moral imperatives or linear thought. But play this album while browsing Daniel Mann's history of circus geeks, *We Were Not As Others*, and all the music contained herein will ring true in an appropriately unsettling fashion.

DYRELLA/MIZUTANI/TOYOZUMI LIVE IN JAPAN, 1997

CBGCO 061012 2CD

BY ALAN CUNNINGHAM

Impressed by sax wildman Arthur Doyle's role in R.E.M.'s incendiary Blue Hawaii unit, promoters of his first tour of Japan in 1997

arranged a full card of rumbas with local guitarists like Keiji Horie and Bordones' Selichi Yonemoto. But the most unexpected pickup group on the tour consisted of handbittering free jazz drummer Sabu Toguzo and Takeaki Mizutani, better known as the leader of mysterious free rock group Les Raillées. Besides Redusively equal to make JD Salinger and Thomas Pynchon look like shameless midflight chasers, Mizutani has only released three albums over the past 35 years and his last (and until now, only) guest appearance was on a folk-rock record from 1971. Toyozumi's experience in Masayoshi Tanakawa's New Directions group, and with fire-breathing saucers like Peter Brotzmann and Katsu Abe made him an obvious choice.

Last night had that heavy saxophone/guitar collaborations can provide visceral thrills, but with a lone canine like Doyle the potential for collateral damage was always going to be high. And indeed on their first meeting, the Japanese players seemed overeager to merely shade in the empty space around the American. Fortunately they weren't as restrained for the remainder several days later — and that is the date documented by outsider Italian label Qicco on this gorgeous ink-splashed black, red and orange vinyl double. The sibling sets open immediately with an aggressive, take-no-prisoners assault. While Doyle honks down hard on his usual maniac-like repeating lines, snapping the back of his lungs through his reed reed, Mizutani wails out sustained blocks of weighty feedback augmented with squashed rims of wavy notes, over Toyozumi's dynamic, perpetually rhythmic. Halfway through, the piece turns into a divisive struggle for solo space between Doyle and Mizutani, with Toyozumi doing his best to keep them apart. It's an exhilarating intro, but suspense lingers about one group's ability to coalesce.

The second piece, "Alabama And Mississippi Reunited," is slightly more considered and works better for it. Doyle gives the Japanese a layers ample space to work up a frantic head of steam before he slips in briefly on tin flutes, skittering nimbly over the top of the roaring engine of sound before leaping off again prior to impact. The rest of the set sees relatively little active triplay. The highlight is a moody, even subtly moving duo between Doyle's primitive snarling and restrained, wispy shards from Mizutani's guitar. If it's not quite the cross-cultural meltdown the bill promises, it's a weirdly fascinating collaboration nonetheless.

DYSRHYTHMIA PRETEST

RELAPSE 6972 CD

BY PHIL FRIEDEM

The Philadelphia trio Dysrhythmia are not at all the sort of group typically sponsored by the extreme Metal label Relapse. Their blend of post-hardcore bombast and Prog intricacy takes cues from the more spacious end of Metal, but owes just as much to the muscular jazz-roots of the Sonny Sharrock Band or Ronald Shannon Jackson's Decoding Society. With their stop on a dime changes, guitar blurs and occasionally furtive tempos, Dysrhythmia neatly fit alongside primarily instrumental groups like The Flying Luttermothers, Orthrom, Runs, Sightings and even Lightning Bolt.

Pretest is Dysrhythmia's third release, following 2000's *Contradiction* and 2001's *No*

Inference

It's a little more intricate than *No Inference*, with riffs building frostily rather than following the propulsive grooves that distinguished the last disc. The two-part "Annihilation" suite is the album's high point, particularly "Annihilation I", where Clayton Ingles's throbbering, post-punk bassline bobs Kevin Huffnagel's screaming space rock meets itself guitar. It's unclear how much of this other-worldly music is intended, and how much improvised, but given the quality of the results, it's difficult to care.

If there's a problem with the record, it's that Dysrhythmia don't always have the courage of their convictions. The slow number is a watery jam that goes nowhere, and not in a fun way, like Subarashii Space. It's also possible to dispute their choice to hire Steve Albini as engineer. His obsession with huge drum sounds makes it almost impossible to hear just how locked-in and unified they really are. Still, on balance, Pretest is a superb record by a wordless group with much to say.

FISCHER/STANGASSINGER/ SCHWEIGER

WIEN 3

EXTRALATE EX202 CD

BY JOHN CRATCHLEY

Viennese saxophonist and violinist Michael Fischer's last two recordings — one solo, the other a duo with guitarist Gary Smith — precipitated a move towards a combination of New Music and free improvisation. This tie recording with Hermann Stangassinger on double bass and Hannes Schweiger on drums and percussion could be a culmination of that manorism.

Fischer is a theorist, for whom the need to internalize his music acts as the goal or impetus to experiment further. As expressed in the aforementioned part of the trio's manifesto seen them defining their work as "an answer to the atrophy of human communication". In musical terms, atrophy is taken to mean a reliance on repetitive and therefore inhibitive forms. Well, the trio are in no danger of falling on this precipice. They constantly shift their improvisational ground, while maintaining a consistently high level of interaction.

Fortunately, the theorist in Fischer does not lead to the music's cerebral confinement. These thoroughly approachable improvisations demonstrate considerable diversity and lightness of touch. The trio's range allows them to explore a variety of structures and forms, from blinding sax/bass/drums free Improv to highly controlled pieces that showcase Fischer's percussive explorations and Schweiger's percussive meander. The exploration of the possibilities of new sounds is also high on the collective agenda. As a saxophonist, Fischer has long experimented with multiphonic effects but this CD also allows him a free range with his violin. Particularly effective are his stately bowed and drawn out croaks that literally put the music under stress and duress.

The trio are most effective at creating diversity of mood through what they describe as "new aggregate states and nonconformistic sound associations". In other words, the combined instrumentation available to this new trio allows them to examine new ground while reinforcing some already existing certainties. "Ultor

MARV - 13 Elements

Nicenorm - Dumb

epileptus...

Methadon - Dotted Noise Area

Slow Motion - The day of station wagons

Melodien - A slight difference in the air pressure

Vento - Vento

Vento - Pragmatics

Distribution: Italy - Wide
Other Export: export@abraxas.it

Disasters By Choice
P.O. Box 4068

00182 Roma-Agnio - Italia

Tel/Fax +39.06.24403726

www.disastersbychoice.com

e-mail: s.pinz-dbc@mclink.it



staubgold

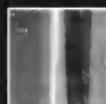
MUSIC OUT OF PLACE



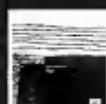
**ekkehard
ehlers**
potter braucht
keinen feind
staubgold 40 - cd/
...an hour of music...



**hammer-
flimmer
kollektief**
cavatina
staubgold 40 - cd/
...magnificent new
album by the Swiss
German jazz collective...



SUN
s/t
staubgold 30 - cd/cd/
...feat. remixes by
Mitsval, Plastique,
Christoph Heine
etc...



**oren ambarchi
& martin ng**
vijil
wsk001 - cd
...incl. artwork
and videos by Tim Franklin
(Mago)...

RENTAL COMING:
sack & bissie - kindred cd/cd, jessup suchy -
catch you cold, seat hornbeam - 8 guitars etc...

AVAILABLE BY:
shellshock (uk), jaded exposure (us)

staubgold.com

"Motown" is a slow blues delivered with a marvelous slackness of drive reminiscent of Art Pepper, which underlines the trio's ability to play straight ahead with conviction.

HENRY GRIMES TRIO THE CALL

DET RACK GTR0045 CD/EP

BY EDWIN POUNCEY

The recent discovery that Albert Ayler's bass player Henry Grimes has survived and is living in Los Angeles, a city slightly disoriented from his self-imposed 10-year silence, was for many '60s jazz followers one of last year's highlights. For those who have only become aware of Grimes's existence by reading Marshall Manowitz's interview with him (The Wire 227), Italian label Det Rakk's reissue of The Call – as part of their ongoing ESP-Disk release programme – is timely.

Recorded on 28 December 1965, The Call sees the Philadelphia born bassist leading a trio with drummer Idris Price and Perry Robinson on clarinet through a session that remains refreshingly fresh and burning with invention. Much of the credit belongs to Robinson, who explores every aspect of his instrument to create a varied and exciting panoply of sounds. These range from marching band explosions merged with alto saxophone and bass clarinet intonations, to snakecharming drones. There's an almost naive simplicity about this music, with Robinson's clarinet frequently rattling like a blackbird, gauntling its nest, while Price rocks around his kit in the background and Grimes elegantly explores the full range of his bass without disturbing the rhythmic drive of his fellow players.

When Grimes takes a solo towards the end of "For Dignity", he plays it cool, bowing and plucking at his bass with a precision that slots satisfyingly into the frame of his composition. No doubt a few of the new breed of free jazz players heard The Call in its original issue, particularly Will Parker. Three decades on, Grimes's musical shout to the world has lost none of its original power.

MICHAEL HARRISON

REVELATION: MUSIC FOR THE HARMONICALLY TUNED PIANO

MICHAEL HARRISON MUSIC NO NUMBER CD

BY MARCUS BOON

New York based composer/pianist Michael Harrison cut his teeth as La Monte Young's piano tuner for The Golden Thread Piano in the 1980s. He is the only pianist, aside from Young, authorised to perform this epic piece. A long-time student of the late Indian raga master Pandit Pran Nath, and, more recently, Usad Nashir Ali Khan, Harrison has continued Young's exploration of just intonation in a specially redesigned "harmonic piano" with a pedal to modulate pitches around any key, allowing the piano to play 24 pitches per octave. This custom-made instrument uses only a single string per note (as contrast to the three on a regular piano) giving a harp-like effect that was heard to great effect on Harrison's debut, 1992's *From Ancient Worlds*.

In contrast to the CD's delicate overstatement, Revelation, a live recording made in 2001 at New York's Lincoln Center, has more in common with Young's piano works, in particular the "tone clouds" discovered in the Well-Tuned Piano. These are basically clusters of pitches played together

rapturously with both hands to form a chord-like matrix which stretches out in time in an almost drone-like fashion. Used with Just Intonation tuning, the technique produces remarkable sets of overtones as the pitches resonate with each other, building into a pulsating, shimmering wall of sound in which all kinds of ghost-like sound effects and structures appear.

Although the effect best heard live since it is an acoustic phenomenon, the CD captures the strange beauty of Just Intonation, allowing the listener to experience the way notes that initially sound "out of tune" become compelling as the ear "tunes" itself away from the murky approximations of conventional Western equal tempered tuning back towards perfect pitch. In particular, Revelation sets out to emphasise the comma – the tiny excess of pitch in natural tuning systems which Western equal temperament sought to tame through its insistence on regular intervals.

A formidable pianist, Harrison's playing is less jaunty than Young's, but he shares with his teacher a fascination with recombining form and improvisation through rapé-like structures, which beckon toward an unexpected universe of sound relationships.

HUGH HOPPER

JAZZLOOPS

BURNING SHED NO NUMBER CD

BY JULIAN COLEY

After meeting Terry Riley in 1986, the 1960s David Allen started exploring the potential of tape loops. When Hugh Hopper joined Allen in France, he became involved in their investigations of cyclical composition. In 1969, in Soft Machine with Mike Oldfield, Robert Wyatt and engineer Bob Woolford, Hopper used looping techniques to make a soundtrack for Peter O'Donnell's multimedia show *Spaceoid*, a recording of which eventually surfaced as a *Cometron CD* in 1996. In 1972, on his departure from Soft Machine, Hopper made the album 1984, a more concentrated and imaginative utilisation of tape loop technique, which has become increasingly impressive with the passage of years and the steady spread of its influence.

Computer technology has revolutionised the procedure, cutting out lots of the awkward graft, but skewed manipulation of periodicity still yields fascinating results. *Jazzloops*, a burn-to-order release from the German-based Burning Shed operation, was assembled 2001-3. Kanti, UK, Hopper has plundered his personal archive of recordings and concocted a series of captivating layered pieces based on resonance and overlap. The source materials feature a gang of old friends, including saxophonists Eric Dean, Didier Malherbe, Simon Picard and Peter-Olivier Govin, drummers John Marshall and Nigel Morris, guitarist Patrice Meyer and Robert Wyatt's voice and piano. Hopper appears on most tracks too, playing guitar and Hammond organ as well as his wonderfully fizzy signature bass.

"Jazz" broadly designates the favour but here the word encompasses a spectrum of styles and moods from searing ambient circuits to irresistible shuffling funk. Hopper has long been a connoisseur of texture and atmosphere, and he engineers these aspects expertly on the disc's 11 tracks. The music is miraculously patterned yet alive with surprises. Variant figures and

melodic emerge and grow within the repetitive flow and groove. It has predictable points of reference – Soft Machine, Terry Riley, Battleship Brew, Larry Graham – yet Hopper's searching, personal stamp and fine judgement render it perfectly here and now, with a hint of what comes next.

UTAH KAWASAKI

UTAH.JMOD.RADI

RADIO 8888 CD

BY BRAIN MARLEY

In the West, a analogue synthesizer player Utah Kawasaki is perhaps best known for Astro Twin, his microscopic sound duo with "howling voice" vocal artist Ami Yoshida. Mongose, his trio with guitarist Taku Sugimoto and Teruji Akeyama, made the quirky *Influent* at Penguin House CD. But this activity is just the tip of a very large iceberg. Since 1994, Kawasaki has used a slew of music on cassette, almost all of which is solo exploration. Work in progress, you might say, except that the results belie its youth and inexperience.

Utah.modernd is a selection of the pieces he made at home between 1994 and 1999, with the exception of one track recorded especially for this release with fellow electronic musician Tetsuya Yasuura, both of whom are members of the group *Mimmo*. I sometimes wonder whether musicians are obliged to become improvisers nowadays simply because the hidebound world of composition fails to comprehend their media operandi. On the evidence of *Utah.modernd*, Kawasaki is a composer, though improvisation is the forum in which his work is most often presented. His electronic soundscapes often merely hint from those of, say, Keiji Sonohara and Jonathan Harvey, in which defiance sometimes shades into perversity, but verse and arias would have greatly appreciated the sculptural relationship to sound. The improviser whose work is most like Kawasaki's is Thomas Lehr, especially Lehr's solo CD, *Festzirkus*.

The 33 tracks on *Utah.modernd* run from between 1.7 seconds and 11 minutes, though most are of three minutes duration or less. Because the gaps between tracks are often minimal, the CD seems purpose-built for shuffle play. In fact, I recommend it – not because Kawasaki hasn't programmed the pieces well, simply because they're kaleidoscopic and suggestive of multiple developments, and a fixed format limits the potential composite experiences that Utah.modernd is capable of generating.

RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK

COMPLIMENTS OF THE MYSTERIOUS PHANTOM

HYNA TMF0111 CD

BY BEN WATSON

This release documents the legendary multi-saxophone baritoneist Roland Kirk live at the Backstage, San Diego State University on 5 November 1974. Joel Dom supplies sleeve notes, his unabashed enthusiasm and brio always welcome in the over-worshipping church of American jazz. Dom produced all of Kirk's albums from 1965 onwards, but he commends this recording as "the best example yet of who and what Rahsaan was on any given night". He includes a mock obituary of "the Mysterious Phantom" and a letter (referring to "the imbecile Dom") banting

URE-D'S BLACK BEIGS (HORN) | CD
LINE-D'S MARY HANSON (HORN) | CD
LINE-D'S MARY HANSON (DRUMS) | CD

TICKET TO RIDE (CD) | ANGUS GIBSON, WHITNEY ANDERSON, AND MICHAEL HARRIS (VOCALS)

with jazz industry in-jokes and satirical barbs. Rahsaan was a hell for leather player who occasionally blows your mind. The best way to listen to him is to re-up on his driving solo set of jive – ones who play the charges” – from Chico Berry to Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt, and then enjoy the way Rahsaan blows everything to smithereens. This show induces three raps to the audience. His sentimental, heartfelt words help explain why Rahsaan is so dearly loved by those who saw him, but otherwise more detached listeners. He plays to the hit the part of the black blues guy who will give away a share of the funk (a bit different from the complexly coded claim of Miles Davis, for example).

Although some of the blowing here is harrowing – including the famous stunts with nose flute and three horns simultaneously – Rahsaan cannot escape the edge state of nightclub jazz in the mid-70s. John Goldfarb (drums) and Henry Pearson (bass) are fine, but pianist Hilton Ruiz fits every sock and cranny with rans and chords, leaving you feeling like you’re drowning in cocktail ambience, bunting into glass cherries round every ice cube. A listener who doesn’t particularly want to buy into his sound and its mystic associations is left high and dry.

Rahsaan has a similar impact to the Terence Chase Quartet which toured England during the 80s jazz revival; he splits listeners between the “live” aesthetes (pros) and the “dead” critics (jazz). Unfortunately, a jazz set-up is too boorish for the dance floor. Rahsaan wants to deliver, making the music sound shambolic. You miss the edge which a “Sex Machine” guitar might give the rhythm (this is where the hammonds secede). While the nods to our jazz [they begin with a composition by McCoy Tyner] are fun, they’re rhetorical references rather than anything really committed. On his circular dream beds, Rahsaan sounds like a street sonny Rollins, similarly unable to shake off a certain kidcity romanticism. Although evidently a real live, it’s hard to appreciate this gig on cold plastic. Jazz would have to wait until David Murray or a tenor saxophonist who could solve the problems thrown up by Rollins’ post-Critique dissolution of form: tell the playhouse down but not leave you disappointed.

MARK LOCKETT THE LOOP: REORCHESTRATED

WHOLEY PMS 1998/004 4CD

BY JULIAN COWLEY

“Having become custodian of a gamelan saturated in 1995 I have become intrigued with using it in non-traditional ways,” declares Mark Lockett in the sleeve-note to The Loop. Reorchestrated, Lockett’s involvement with gamelan and with non-traditional musical usage actually goes much further back. In 1979 he was a founder member of Jan Steele and Neil Sartorelli English Gamelan Orchestra. A decade later he formed the contemporary gamelan group Metalekars. As an academic based in Birmingham, he has specialised in ethnomusicology. His own initial training at the University of York was as a pianist and he studied composition and music technology with Pauline Oliveros in California. In 1986 he recorded Slower Than Molasses (Practical Music) with fellow pianist Janet Shipton, performing music by ex-Schraff Orchestra participants Howard Skempton and Michael Parsons, as well

as their own compositions. However, the threshold between Javiese and Balkese tradition and systematic experimentalism is Lockett’s favoured location.

The Loop, a major reorchestration of that position, begins life as an installation, running continuously for eight hours each day at Birmingham’s Ikon Gallery. Live performance was subjected to real-time treatment, diffused and beamed with computer generated versions of the same set of pieces. Lockett’s recordings reflect the music for this release, sequencing 16 pieces according to the J/Ching’s random determinants. Gamelan instruments are central but augmented with other percussions, electronics and sampling, and sometimes underpinned with bass guitar. It’s a seductive combination of elements, but the range of moods and ideas within the music results in a persistently tantalising rather than simply hypnotic experience.

Some of the pieces are evocative of the instruments’ heritage, luxuriating in a haze of sonic pollen that surrounds the structured clinking of steel metal. Minimalist reference points are encountered frequently: “FLUX” starts and concludes with a pulse deeply in the Steve Reich vein. Tevier Uncle’s bass guitar carries shades of Steve Reich’s contribution to “W.H.”, the “slowed-down Terry Riley” ensemble ran in York with Jon Steele. Sonorities of hand bells and toy piano come and go, evoking recollection of composer Christopher Hobbs and John White and their Primevere Theater Orchestra. Software samples and electronic touches figure without orientation, enriching the percussive patterns and nudging them off-kilter just enough to dispel any sense of over-formality or predictability. Over the expanse of four CDs Lockett and his co-interpreters very nicely pace and sustain the invention. The Loop may lack a confidence of influences but it’s also a singular and personal musical achievement.

FRANK LOWE BLACK BEIGES

GATEFOLD GTR/CD/HORN/COP

BY EDWARD POWERS

Tenor saxophonist Frank Lowe belonged to the group of US free jazz musicians who continued to carry the torch John Coltrane lit before his untimely death in 1967. In 1973 Lowe made Black Beiges for ESP-Disk, his first record as a leader. He was joined by drummer Rashid Sharif, Larry Jenkins (aka The Wizard) on violin, Art Ensemble Of Chicago soprano and alto saxophonist Joseph Jarman and a young William Parker on bass to produce one of the finest and most powerful free jazz gouts committed to vinyl since Albert Ayler’s Spiritual Unity kicked off the label in 1964.

Indeed, Black Beiges is one of the last of the great ESP-Disk jazz recordings. As Lowe’s sleeve-note simply states, “the music is based on faith and power. The album is made up of two Love originals and a composition from Jarman. Lowe’s opening ‘In Tonge’s Name’ is both a tribute to his musical guru and a personal proclamation that heralds the unleashing of the next wave of ‘The music’, a free blowing blast of extraordinary power and passion that pushes us way forward for a full 25 minutes, as Lowe scours the air with his instrument and redefines the art of playing tenor saxophone.”

Equally gassy (and lengthy) is Jarman’s “Thulien” which, after a short introductory refrain from Lowe called “Brother Joseph”, launches into another freeform howl that pours out from the collective souls of the players. Those critics who could only hear a harrumph of noise when this record was first released just weren’t listening. The times, although seemingly dominant, are submissively pounding on the inside of this enormous and intricate musical mass just waiting to break out.

Lowe went on to join Alice Coltrane’s group, where he added his own touch of creased spirituality to her ensemble. He later immersed himself in the playing techniques of Lester Young. But Black Beiges remains one of his finest recorded moments. As a free jazz pinnacle, it deserves to be heard afresh.

MASS

MIXED MEDIA

PARATACTILE 1114-CD

BY JULIAN COWLEY

Mixed Media is the third album from the Mass trio featuring Gary Smith’s electric guitar, Gary Jeff on bass and electronics, and Lou Doolittle on drums. The sonorous aspect of Smith’s instrumental allows him to divide his voice and enter into sophisticated real-time dialogue with himself. It’s an arrangement that can be directed to whip up a fair degree of turbulence, as Smith has shown emphatically in the past and as he demonstrates at “Internal heat”. When he impresses on this album, however, is his highly personal refinement of technique to ever more subtle yet still powerful ends.

Smith doesn’t dispense the scope of the stomp guitar, or its capacity to launch widespread showers of splintered glass and molten metal, but his disciplined suppression of flamboyance and excess achieves new levels of interest here. He is helped in this by the nature of his collaboration. Jeff is a remarkably saturnine bassist, blunt, opaque, pluming gloomy depths or rambling aimlessly. His contribution gives Mass its anchor, its gravity and weight. Doolittle, who like Jeff has performed with Kevin Martin’s God, couples force with agility but places both under evident restraint, serving as an irregularly beating heart, adding surface colour or marking out rhythmic crescends on cymbals and drums like lightly pelting coraxas around the dull pounding core of Jeff’s bass.

Above this nuclear activity, Smith’s guitar slithers, swells and slides, while avoiding conventional touch and attack. His approach suggests instead compressed energy sounds wrung physically from speaker, pedals, squeezed, trebolo and strings massaged into life. Given the degree of technological mediation involved, his playing feels remarkably tactile, producing an odd sense of melting at the interface of muscularly muscle and musical machinery. Jeff heightens that sense with sympathetic electronics, refined touches denied him by his imploded bass role, which mesh well with Smith’s fragile textures. 12 tracks are listed, but the hour-long Mixed Media has a unified feel, a wise sense of group identity and purpose. The trio’s rock leanings have largely been obfuscated into relatively subdued intensity. As an improvising unit, they are now in more or less uncharted territory, working with singular combinations of compression and implication,



density and suggestion. And there's still room for the occasional frenetic, cathartic squall.

MILLSART

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY VOL 4

AKOIS AK00203 221212

MONOBOK
MONOBOK
LOGISTIC LOGO CD 010

BY KEN HOLLOWAY

An easo, should anyone forget, links lines of opposing force, the most basic component of the vortex, its simplest schematic. Without that understanding, it simply remains a line. In the same way, Detroit Techno collective Underground Resistance would never have amounted to more than a radical corporate logo, were it not for the involvement of composers, strategists and visionaries such as Mike Banks, Jeff Mills and Robert Hood. A nameless assemblage in constant motion, it compressed drama, or its extreme absence, into the purest forms of energy.

Celebrating honesty as a state of mind and a condition of existence, the latest installment of Millsart's *Every Dog Has Its Day* sequence comes as a special limited edition 12" double pack, pressed onto 180 gram vinyl, which is probably the most weight this gravity-defying selection of compositions is ever likely to carry. Cells and sequences are neatly stacked and balanced against each other, beats rebound and keyboards tumble into exhilarating freefall. This is Jeff Mills at his most beguiling and inventive, taking a chance that being honest means having nothing to prove for once, and it all works quite beautifully.

Responsible for volume two of the industrial Newform transmission series, Underground Resistance's former minister of information Robert Hood is back with a new project for France's Logique label. Available in different formats with a mix of divergent track listing, from three track vinyl EP to 11 track CD album, *Monobok* is about hitech/noise/wire/wall as magic. The structures are broad, the spaces between them impressive. "The Concrete" and "Elemental" are exercises in disciplined momentum, while "Down Town" offers a stern reminder of what Techno can do once it gets jacked into the system. Resistance can operate as a line of force too.

MOLASSES

A SLOW MESSE

FANCY FANCY CD 0202

BY EDWIN POUNCEY

For their third sprawling selection of Bible black songs and instrumental passages, Montreal-based seven piece Molasses have come up with their most elaborate package so far. The two CDs making up *A Slow Mess* are tightly squeezed inside a double gatefold sleeve, each with a separate fully illustrated booklet of lyrics and recording information. These are packaged inside a separate printed envelope showing the outside of an x-rayed church that looks like it has come straight out of one of Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic tales of American horror. Loud vocalists and astringent brass. Chernoff's measured delivery of the material only adds to the feeling of creeping doom resonating through this latest sounding. Sounding drained and full of despair, Chernoff's sombre style occasionally recalls the early work of fellow Montreal artist Leonard Cohen. Only

Cohen's twist of sardonic humour and pathos is starkly absent here. Because Chernoff's delivery is almost monotone, it is difficult to focus on what he is attempting to convey through the two overlong discs.

At one point, however, the central character from Flannery O'Connor's *Wiseblood* novel suddenly turns into view and begins to preach his blasphemous gospel of self denial and chastement. The pseudo-religious theme is further illustrated by the music, performed by a group augmented by members from Godspeed You! Black Emperor. The Salvation Army styled jingling band which unexpectedly emerges from the blackness throughout the set temporarily lifts the bleakness, giving fresh hope that the rest of the record will move in a new direction.

That never happens, but by now the steady drift of Molasses' music adds a hint of subtle sweetness. A Slow Mess is far too long and involved for its own good, but it's a varied and interesting work that deserves attention.

GÜNTHER MÜLLER & OTOMO YOSHIHIDE

TIME TRAVEL

ERNSTHAL CD 001

BY BRUNN MARLEY

This is, of course, a key constituent of music. But this CD approximates one particular aspect of time, the period of stasis during long-haul flights when time zones are crossed and hours are lost or gained in the blink of an eye. Using minimalist recordings and sampled but mostly self-generated sounds, Günter Müller recycles sonic material and embellishes it intriguingly. He filters a select past into the perpetual present, thereby influencing future developments. In every respect he's a quality improviser, alert to the moment and what the music requires.

Günter Müller and Otomo Yoshihide have in common a seriousness atypical of improvisers. When they met in performance for the first time at Yoshihide's AMPLIFY 2002 festival in Tokyo last year, their set was freighted with bold ideas and dramatic developments. How interesting, therefore, to hear this CD, recorded just a couple of days earlier, in which a very different, though every bit as fascinating aspect of their musical relationship is revealed.

Although Otomo has dispensed his skills as an electric guitarist, he would be unwise to take him at his word. His technique may be limited, but his musicality and imagination are not. He peppers Müller's shifting array of patterns and textures with open chords and sharp chiming notes, and the duo music they make is seductive, especially when Otomo embellishes the soundscape with billowing clouds of feedback.

This is Müller's fourth release on Ernstthal, three of which are among the best items in the catalogue. This is one of them. The way he uses sound reveals his origins as a percussionist, though he nearly always implies rhythms rather than stating them outright, and his preference is for irregular pulses and overlapping waves of sound. Some of these qualities can be heard on every track on *Time Travel*, but, especially on "Nancy D1", which conveys the feeling of drifting off to sleep then jerking awake for a few deliciously disorientating moments, before the process begins all over again.

MAT NEUHAUS/JOHN CAGE

FONTANA MIX: FEED

ALSA MARKOHN PLANN IN TERNIN CD 044 CO

BY BRUNN MARLEY

Texas born Mat Neuhaus is a steppen wolf the strictest sense of the word. His creative mission has always been based on the conviction that our sense of space — the foundation of utopia — is based as sound as well as sight. In the 1960s and '70s, as well as giving solo performances that required the transport of almost a ton of percussive instruments, he helped pioneer live electronic performance. Between 1965-68, he gave a series of live realizations of John Cage's *Fontana Mix*, an aleatoric score that allows for an infinity of possible mappings. Like Robert Ashley, he became fascinated by the structural possibilities of acoustic feedback, perhaps the ultimate in chance or unplanned sound.

In the very early 1960s, apart from John Cage's use of phonograph cartridges, live electronic music did not exist. Neuhaus's passion was to lay contact microphones on top of large kettle drums without caping them to create acoustic feedback loops which, because of the shifting position of the microphones, had a densely layered spatial quality. This in turn was affected by the acoustic of the performance space, which in these performances ranges from Carnegie Hall in New York to the studios of Columbia Records and West Deutsche Rundfunk.

It is difficult to generalize about all very different realizations as it is to describe them specifically. To what extent these works communicate any more than two-dimensionally on CD is questionable. The best advice is to move the loudspeakers as far apart as possible and increase the volume dramatically. This results in the exponentially broadening spectrum of detail with each cycle of amplification. But to be honest, it does little justice to the immense subtlety of Neuhaus's live music. The 1965 performance from the ZAU festival in Madrid and the equally celebrated realization from earlier than that year at the New School of Social Research both become lost in an uninflected wash of sound. The two studio realizations are more subtle, but perhaps lack a sense of drama and presence.

Starting to guide, these are major documents in the development of American electronic music and they're an overdue acknowledgement of Neuhaus's significance. Along with David Tudor, Nirmal Ranik and Charlotte Moorman, he is one of the most sympathetic interpreters of the Cage philosophy. Anyone remotely interested in this period should take notice.

PHILL NIBLOCK

TOUCH FOOD

TOUCH TOES CD

BY DAVID STRUBBS

Phill Niblock is perhaps the least known exponent of the minimalist tradition. A relative lack of recorded output has denied him the attention afforded to the likes of La Monte Young and Steve Reich, although a British concert in 1994 emerged by Blast First did boost his profile on these shores. He is ergo the most minimal of the minimalists — he makes Jerry Riley sound like Mike Oldfield by comparison. Niblock requires the listener to re-evaluate



their relation with music in space and time. At first acquaintance with *Touch Food*, a double CD collection, each piece seems to consist of his holding a single, albeit maligned, note or chord which 'goes' nowhere. It merely hovers for anything up to 20 minutes like some gigantic UFO overhead, before dying away. Once you get inside this music rather than observe it with bewilderment, the effect is mysterious and – well, magical.

Nöckel achieves his effects through multi-tracking of live and processed tools and sampling, all based on original performances on acoustic instruments. He creates an aural illusion of continuity, like the perpetual gush of a waterfall; for instance, his ingenious layering methods mean that all kinds of infinitesimal but crucial structural and sonic shifts are taking place on a cumulative basis.

The naming of the pieces is arbitrary, based on puns on the names of the players or the role they played in, "Sea Jelly Yellow", based around Ulrich Krieger's banjoine seabreeze, or the most dance and seemingly anchoring of these pieces, a formidable challenge for the novice, "Sweet Potato", featuring Carol Robinson on bass clarinet, bassoon horn and Eb clarinet is marginally bolder, the violins tangle, the wavering bass thrills like a solemn chorus of foghorns, or male voices "Van Almost May", featuring Kaspar Topzilp on electric bass, lists and lurches like a looper taken from Gavin Bryars' *The Sinking Of The Titanic*. Press the CD fast-forward button, however, and, like one of those time-delay shots of flowers opening and closing, you'll get a surprising sense of its musical evolution.

Most awesome of all is "Pan-Fried '70", initially intended as a 75-minute piano piece but, because the tempo was "a 70-year old and 'became a little tired after 70 minutes'", it stops there. Divided up into five segments, it is performed with a single nylon string flossed to a single piano string, "stroked with Roisin fingers". And yet, once processed, its multiple sonic effects, both real and the result of what you might call a *troupe* (imagine, are intense, swarming the entire sky like a Hessian host. Nöckel recommends you play this music loud, which always seems like cheating to me, but this truly benefits from being cranked up. It's like the end of the world.

BENGT FRIPPE NORDSTRÖM THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICE

MYSTIC 0210202 2CD

BY JULIAN COWHILL

Swedish jazz outsider Bengt Frisse Nordström died in 2000. He had taken up the clarinet after hearing Tony Scott, and senior saxophone after hearing Sonny Rollins. Then exposure to the music of Ornette Coleman and especially Albert Ayler kindled him towards less regulated spontaneity and the isolation of solo concepts and small edition, self-released records. Occasionally, venturesome and supportive figures such as Don Cherry would join him in duets. In the mid-1970s, Nordström found he was able to convene a group, The Environmental Control Office, and at last he had a sustaining context. By the time of this recording at Jazz Club Fasching, Stockholm in June 1988 the line-up featured bassist Björn Ake, who also died in

2000, drummer Perter Uuskyla and violinist Lars Svarteson. It was the last time the quartet met. The final disc features a sprawling 50 minute improvisation that speaks of Ayler's influence from the opening burst of weighty wheats. It's a curious kind of freedom that is an encirclement by homage, and Nordström rarely matches Ayler's raw force. Still, beyond the minimalist slogging of earthy honks and rhythmic burbles, he also touches on the Ayler aspect. He has real feeling for the expressiveness of his instruments sound and an aptitude for piecing together fragments into open-ended solos, packed with allusions to talk music and children's songs.

Svarteson moves is keenly felt to the tenor's but. His presence may suggest a parallel to Ayler's inclusion of violinist Michael Samson in his ensemble sound. This quartet is more inclined to dip into mainstream methods and techniques to sustain the momentum. That tendency is given its head on the second disc, which opens with a version of Tony Scott's "Swinging in Sweden". Nordström transfers his vigor to the clarinet and allows small eccentricities to creep into his own around the theme. On "Fapping", he pushes the instrument further out, goaded by Svarteson's bass and inventive obliqueness and Ake's responsive bowing. Uuskyla at this point sounds too comfortable making time, running in a little too effectively. For the concluding "Fasching", Nordström returns to tenor and Ayler's ghost stalks once more through the music. Overall, a welcome opportunity to hear an overlooked master playing with commitment and power, but a few more risks collectively taken would have intensified his impact.

NUCLEUS LIVE IN BREMEN CUNEIFORM RECORDS 1751174 3CD

BY DAVID SHOEMAKER

A British sextet formed by trumpeter/Hughie horn player Ian Carr in 1969, Nucleus were articulating their own take on the fusing of jazz and rock before Bitches Brew hit the streets. The key difference between the British crnt and their Stateside contemporaries was their attack, which was markedly less alloyed by jazz practice. Though the front line of Carr and saxophonist/festivist Brian Smith had considerable jazz experience – Carr in particular had not altogether escaped the long arm of Miles Davis – Nucleus were noticeably, if not painstakingly seeking a rock credibility in their contrituous, largely groove-driven sets. Perhaps the most telling measure of their success is the subsequent recruitment of drummer John Marshall and keyboardist/vocal player Karl Jenkins by Soft Machine. By the time of this 1971 concert recorded by Radio Bernes, Nucleus had issued three albums and their concerts were right at snare on a drum head.

This is not to suggest that Nucleus did not put elements of advanced jazz and free improvisation into the mix. Through their themes may sound quaint by today's standards, they had some of the same lyrical smarts as the tunes Joe Zawinul contributed to the Cannonball Adderley book before he left to join Miles. Nucleus were also very adept in superheating the materials and controlling the resulting molten sound, particularly Smith, whose work was on a par with the likes of Joe Farrell and Davis Liebman. And

they were not shy about venturing into free improvisation, their forays often signified by Jenkins's oboe. The results were sufficiently bristling, as is the case with Jenkins's exchange with Marshall and guitarist Ray Russell opening the second CD. However, unlike some of their American contemporaries – mostly notably the original edition of Weather Report – Nucleus did not let these more daring aspects stand on their own, choosing instead to use them as a new connecting lengthy jams.

Unfortunately, the departure of Jenkins and Marshall left Nucleus a decidedly more inert unit, which is perhaps why they faded into the 1980s. For a few years, however, Nucleus contributed substantially to the creative chain reaction that, initially, was fusion, the merits of which are very well represented by Lee in Bremen.

FRANK PAHL THE BACK OF BEYOND

NOVEL CELL RECORDS NCP1612CD

BY DAVID MANZI

On *The Back of Beyond*, composer and multi-instrumentalist Frank Pahl further explores some of the territory he staked out on *Muse For Deserts*, his recent collaboration with the French toy-pop group Nimpheps. Alternating tracks on Beyond feature Pahl's "automotives" – instruments driven by jangly-edged electronic and analogue devices to produce crackly, semi-random melodic and rhythmic patterns for Pahl to work against.

He also continues to supplement his "real" instruments with primitive soundmakers and assumed shirt store finds – including toy piano, doodlebox, toy hand-drums, and "52, three-stringed uke". But the music on Beyond is darker and more brooding than that on *Muse*. Where the tunes on the Nimpheps collaboration tended to foreground timbre, potential persuasion and other childlike sounds, this solo release is dominated by the choruses and long legato notes of harmonicas, clams, harmonicas, and euphoniums.

The tempos are often exaggeratedly slow, most obviously on Pahl's halting cover of "Good Old Days", the normally bouncy theme from Hal Roach's 1930s kids' series *The Little Rascals*. For a composer/musician of such prodigious energy, Pahl's work on Beyond is surprisingly languid, even lazy, in spirit. But, while focusing less – or less overtly – on rhythm, Beyond displays the same mastery of texture and harmony as he earlier work. The sonic palette is vast, and the production is lush and shimmering. Pahl also continues to show a distinct fondness for unusual instrumental juxtapositions, like harmonium/African harp/tarot/guitar, or chimes/air organ/clarinet, and the surprising dissonances they produce. He is able to construct beautiful soundscapes out of any conceivable amalgamation of instruments. The compositions on Beyond are almost impossible to categorize stylistically or geographically.

CHARLEMAGNE PALESTINE IN MID-AIR

AUGA MARCHEN 70100107 CD

BY BRUCE MARLEY

One of the most appealing aspects of Charlemagne Palestine's music is how steadfastly it resists categorization. His so-called minimalism is actually either maximal, his

KOJI ASANO SPRING 2003 Collection

- 030 ABSURD SUMMER.
031 PIANO SUITE VOL.1 FITNESS CLUB
032 GONDOLA ODYSSEY



www.kojiasano.com

info@kojasano.com

Soundcheck

drones operate like none you've heard before, his electronics — as heard on *In Mid-Air* — are of a different order from the extremely similar work produced by his peers during the late 1960s. If he's part of a tradition, it's one largely of his own making. That's appropriate for a man who made the leap of imagination from plain old Charles Martin to the altogether more flamboyant, Charlemagne Palestine.

The five compositions on *In Mid-Air* were made between 1965 (or 1967; the booklet gives conflicting dates) and 1970 at the New York University Intermediate Centre, where Palestine was given access to Don Buchla's modular 100 and 200 systems, courtesy of Morton Subotnick. Each of the compositions is a blend of oscillating sine tones coloured and impenetrated with noise. Each is referred to as "a Late night electronic sonority" — recorded at night to minimize sound penetration from the cavernous world outside the studio. Musicians working nowadays with drones and primitive electronics have the weight of history on their shoulders, and that factor

alone can stifle creativity. But Palestine was intent on writing history rather than learning from it, and his unique brand of experimentalism was soon producing good results. When first listened to, these compositions appear simple, almost naive, but they're nothing of the sort. The drones thicken, thin and gently throb; they alter in colour and weight; their characteristics are constantly, elegantly changing. The music accommodates seems to hang indeterminately in the air while working as busily as a hummedgird.

In the early 70s, Palestine's music became increasingly, sometimes violently, realistic. Aspects of it overlapped with performance art, and his instruments of choice became the piano. At the end of the decade, for some 15 years, he withdrew almost entirely from music, disgusted by "the commercial materialism of Reich, Glass, Adams"; lots of little cutsey New Age composers who were diluting minimal piano music to Richard Clayderman-like spiritual posings. His star briefly waned, but now it has risen. In *In Mid-Air* are volume three of Alga Maughan's *Golden Research series*,

and draw from Palestine's personal archive. To my knowledge, none of this material has previously been issued. We're lucky, finally, to be able to hear it.

PO/GYPT GORE/BURNS, CALOIA & HEWARD/BALAI MECANIQUE

MONTREAL FREE!

NO TYPE INT 2003US \$10CD

BY JULIAN CONWELL

This is a hefty slab of free improvising from Montreal, and electric guitarist and arch-vatayist Sam Shabot is in the thick of it. It's less a completion sampler than an archive of what's current, featuring four groups, each occupying an entire CD. Shabot plays on three discs and, although vestiges of his psychiatric excursions and modal flights with the group Shabot Effect linger, it's the metallic resilience, the non-porous, air-absorbent attack of his rock improvement that transmutes most tellingly into these free forms.

The name Po stands for "provocative

operations". It alludes presumably to psychologist Edward De Bono's concept of calculated jets delivered to inscrutable habitual ways of thinking and perceiving. As jets go, these seven improvisations by Shabot, fellow guitarist Rainer Werner, double bassist Alexandre St-Onge and drummer John Heward are easy to take. The guitars chirp away, fending the music's surface with shimmering staccato shards, or unstringing coiled lines in fast spirals. St-Onge slaps and strings and works with springiness and the ebb and flow of tension. Heward soars his kit for complementary timbres. Weiss prepares his instrument for added metal edge. Typically the music proceeds with a kind of collective tumbling roll, a revolving mesh of curiously coordinated sounds.

"Gypt Gore" is Shabot with Napolin Jazz shapeshifter Pélémón. Double bassist Therry Amar pens them on two tracks; Andrew Dickas adds second guitar to two others. As a duo they specialise in agitation, making out parallel trails of nervous energy as they scuttle along without

Size Matters

3", 7", 10" and other misshapen formats

You can never really get enough contact mic recordings, so why should I dare complain? I do, though, because the record is Bea Eaton's *Batts* (Stiching Mixer M705 7"). Comprised entirely of manipulated contact-mic recordings, the three tracks here allow different flavours of noise coding to move around and over themselves like sheets of fury that crawl with Ms. Layene, wavy at trees, tick at others, they create ghostly interior landscapes that are really great. Everything breaks apart like china dishes, then comes back together like velvet mud. (BC)

All those in favour of acoustic guitar and electronics (a mostly nice combination) should be well pleased by *Procurors* (Meteletronik K WELW05 7") by Greg Davis. There's strumming, bickering and all kinds of crackly gout on the A side. Evolving from the noiseosome into the buccolic, it's a sweet trip. The B side is more reflective throughout, being not unlike a slowed-down version of some of the things that John Fahey tried out with Cui De Se's Glenn Jones, although this version is run through some kind of tin-like filters. Good titles. But still. (BC)

Black by *Pet Hurlberg* (Beta-Lactame M705 10") is a pretty nice package, coming with a record of thuddy Industrial music from Hurlberg, plus a bonus CD with a QuickTime movie by John-Mark and Louisa Lograth. The music is guitar-based, and has slow rhythmic ostinations, almost like some imaginary late-middle period of The Swans. The movie is a black and white thing with heavily ominous webbing and camera angles dookey enough to recall Denis Arndt. There are also two musical tracks on the CD, one of which sounds a bit like the last dinner party I did not attend. (BC)

Most coo-coo packaging this time must be *Hip to Be Square* (Sonic Syrup No Number 8")

by *Instruction Shuttle* (aka Todd Christopher). This combines a late-in-square 8" record with a little built-in yourself zooprax displaying a Tarkovsky-like shudder of space dislocation that you can change for each of the record's four tracks. The music is noise, garage electronics stuff. Neither as dreamy or noisy as I expected, and filled with noise disturbing noises that lie out of the background fuzz like the wet alien womb is imaginable. But I get the feeling that your average erection is going to last longer than the zooprax, so handle it carefully. (BC)

Two great labels, two great guys in a net exactly the opposite of Milkman 2 (Gale Asp! My/Melkspelvin SAMY101/MEK003 7") but it could be *Phenophant*, a fine Norwegian laptop outfit, have one ad — "Bees Will Sting, They", a really cool sort of moulding small electronic disasters pushed into a very reasonable, somewhat coaxed sounding form. Leedi's *Vibraphonial Dekobra* weaves their traditional magic on the other side: it is a portable Petty own of new strong cells, wheeling keys, rubbed guitars and general organic drone huncrancy. (BC)

Rosenblatt's new record, *Nigella Major - Scherzhaft* (Stiching Mixer M704 7") stays pretty far away from their House roots. The A side creates a bailed down and very noise-addled wall of short and flavourful sounds. And the two tracks on the B side go all over the place, from free jazz chortling through other more spaced and syncop approaches to extreme non-danceability. (BC)

Perhaps it's unusual for me to review the Soncamps (*Gamboge No Number 7"*) since my *Cappies*, is on it. But since this comp consists of a many short, randomly mixed and accessed tracks by a whole lot of people, it's all but impossible to figure out what or who is playing for more than a few seconds. And we

didn't get any fee for doing it either, so what the hell? They would have been a vastly more annoying road if it had used loated grooves, but it's let's un-annoying the way it is. And if anyone can pick out the tracks by, say, *Alas Licht* or *Christina Carter* or *Meredew*, well, I'll eat a shoe. (BC)

(I pronounced "three", I guess.) is a new comp that celebrates the third birthday of *Stimulus* (Beta-Lactam Ring BEATHEADS 7"). It has one track each by *Blunx*, *Stimulus*, *Vas Defenses*, *Decapitation* and *Regents*, and all four of them are top notch slaps of instrumental weirdness. From the clashing stone zones of Stimulus to the searing edge of Reynold's feedback-wheeeeling, "It's a goddamn lame-balling carnival from start to finish." (BC)

Truman's cleave ab (*Beta-Lactam TOKIN0010*) is another great 10" in the label's lastnames sequence. Truman is the operational name used by Stefan, the man behind Germany's *Dione* label. The music consist of big layers of sounds that are whipped across each other's surfaces like hot desert sand. Some parts are very abstract and untilled endlessly, other parts are folded back in on themselves like big organic sculptures made out of sand-clotted wax. The second side is built around a kind of machine percussion track that sounds like some well event being held far off in the distance, but don't worry, you can see everything from here. (BC)

Wikidex is a collaboration between Joris van Perlo and Bo Bo, who mix together electronics and samples of more earth-based instruments. *Bon Voyage/Dagmar* (Stiching Mixer 7" m7.03) manages to keep a fairly high level of focused edness without allowing itself to move into best territory. At times the sound collages from "Bon Voyage" feel as though they're going to veer too far in that direction, but they always pull back and raise the anarchy level a couple of

notches. And "Dagmar" is more like the soundtrack to a walk on the surface of Mars, as imagined by Sooty Do. It's pretty cool. And spooky, too. (BC)

Menzow's *Timehunter* (Aet-Jen AC166 4CD) comes packaged in a fine looking black leather folder and features six tracks across four discs, all exercises in annihilating time with hilaireatory spatial poetics. Most tracks are assembled from the same kind of rhythmic base that anchored much of 2002's *Menzow*, with fat kick drums and cocaine-blotted leads fired from Maxxx Attila's Inveute 1970s hardrockers and fed on metal flings. "Wormhole" takes up the whole of disc one with rubbery sub-bass navigating a blizzard of digital snow as an enervated guitar part is pulled apart with slow jaggedness force. Halfway through, the track coheres into the kind of obviously ungrimed jam that the Bedoreans have spent their last few discs churning down. Despite the time limitations inherent in the 3" format, "Wormhole" is so zoned that after it's all over it's almost impossible to tell how it all went. Disc two's "Space Trunk" pits a cock-eyed rhythm against bursts of spectrum-spanning radio noise, erupting with all of the unpredictable logic of breaking sunsets, while "Rastaman", on disc three, is Menzow at his most as-skating and linear. "Stone The Crow" finds Bo Soit Youth's Bad Moon Rolling hand-crinkled and weighed down with bricks, its decked guitars leaping huge caparisonal tracks that are further excavated by the crash of a cheap drum kit sounding a flat march to nadie. Disc four is made up of a reworking of Menzow's legendary fat-out "Ab Hunter", originally released by Fat Cat. Here, titled "ed Hunter", it's remastered with jets of high-end static that send it into grotesque, delirious spasms. (DK) □ Reviewed by Byron Coley and David Kenner

any audible goal. Amar and Dickson are more inclined to pause for reflection and "Gupti Goms allow them that without any hint of introspection on their part. It's easy to surrender to the pull of the duo's shepherding but it has to be said that the presence of guests supplies necessary variety to their headlong eastern chatter.

Chris Burns plays electric guitar in a line with bassist Miles Calkin and drummer John Heward; his sound is more wailing and expressive than Shabot's, referencing blues intermittently, and the music here is more open, unarmed and loose textured. Calkin's accompaniment is subtlety yet effective, attentively throbbing and luring or bewing with an ear to the grain. Heward again demonstrates his ability to fit in, to add percussive fibre and colouring that matches the overall feel. Their improvisation, in seven sections, bears the name "Presence". At times it slows to a crawl. In the context of *Montreal Free* as a whole, that pace is welcome. Gentle friction between the instruments at such moments produces some of the most satisfying music in the entire set.

Bala Muthukumar put the seal on the collection, ostensibly a charming powerhouse ensemble in which Shabot, Philimon and Amar are joined by Jesus Levine on keyboards, trombonist Jacques Gravel and drummer Will Glass. The horns relieve free jazz memories and periodically stir up mysticism. But Levine, using ring modulation and other electronic effects, edges out into the abstract and the group, shrinking from the bulb to a smirr, repeatedly goes with him, sometimes for long stretches. The result is unrigged music, shifting alignments of instruments, gradations of mood, carrying the threat of eruption even when most endate. As with Po, "Gupti Goms and Burns/Caleen/Heward, this is improvising in which internal tension between contrasts and correspondences has a cohesive effect and artfully generates momentum, bridging and driving the music. Shabot's sound is well integrated, although so handheld and unfeeling.

PRINCE PAUL POLITICS OF THE BUSINESS

ANNIE LEE CD

BY DAVID STURRUP

Starting musical life with Status Quo in his mid-teens, Prince Paul immediately revolutionised Hip-Hop with his production work on De La Soul's *Three Feet High And Rising*. However, his fortunes took a downturn when he split with De La Soul in 1993 after their third album, *Midtown Madness*. Def Jam presented him with his own label, *Doo Doo Man Records* and then refused to release the work of any of the artists he signed. Despite later official association with Psychoanalyse... What is it? (Westbound) and Handsome Bay Modeling School's So... Who's Your Girl? (Jimmy Bay), his is a relatively hard-luck story, scepticism about the music industry, coupled with a Quixotic determination to inject a bit more wit and intelligence into Hip-Hop, and suck out some of its boorishness and greed, are the twin engines which power Polino's *Politics Of The Business*.

Prince Paul has conceded any bitterness he harbours into acid, often self-deprecating humour. The opening skit, "A Day In The Life" is a full-blown sketch complete with moan-carned laughter, in which Paul is taken to task for his un-commercially: "Man, you'll be lucky to go

double wood with that shit." "The Driveway", another skit, featuring Ryan McNamee and Bitman, is equally dismal, as Paul's would be assassin breaks down in front of him, pleading with him for an entry into the Hip-Hop world.

"So What?" is Paul and co at their best. Featuring Kokene, Masta and Prety Ugly, it's steeped in a heady brew of neo-Punk/Funk and takes a sharp and positive line against the materialistic, macho snobberies generally considered mandatory in Hip-Hop. Gang Starr's Gang chimes in on this theme on "Not Trying To Hear That", offering against the grain that "Money can't be more important than the music". There's a sense here of that post-War elders taking a cautionary stand against the present day expansion and commercialisation of the music they pioneered, which has marginalised many of them. On the title track, Chuck D and Ice T pass on tips to wannabe fledglings over a rumitative backdrop.

All this is well and laudatory. The only problem with *Politics Of The Business* is that there are too few of the loose ends and internal loops of, say, *Three Feet High*. Sometimes, the pairings are a little mismatched and downbeat. Still, that's sometimes a trade-off when you're trying to draw attention to the lyrical side. And there are quite a few musical distinctions: the pecking electric riff of "Make Room", the one-note piano motif rolling like a treadmill on "Chymie Paps", the Pepe Uzcategui style brass effects of "Controversial Pt 2" and, particularly, the skewed, dancing backbeat to "People, Places And Things" which serves as a heartening reminder that years of adversity and disillusionment with the bo havent extinguished Prince Paul's sense of mischief or his creative itch.

RILEY/TILBURY/TIPPETT ANOTHER PART OF THE STORY

FRANKE M. ASKEA CD

BY PHILIP CLARK

Another *Part Of The Story* is a perplexing and puzzling release, containing some of the most placed sounds I've come across on *Errenem*. The creativity of musicians like Riley, Tilbury and Tippett rarely finds itself on a concert level, but throughout this 65 minute set recorded in August 2002 they appear to be surprisingly well behaved and dutiful. Most (but maybe is the second track, "Equanimity"), which sounds like phrases from a Tibetan waterscape have been redistributed over a ten minute duration. The opening phrases of the piece are ornate and decorative, and there's a residual air of neo-impressionistic chimerica throughout the rest. Such a polished surface and seamless construct could easily be mistaken for a fully composed score — not a criticism you'd expect to make in this context.

"Jump-Up" might be an anomaly if flat open Howard Riley's characteristically snarfed boogie-woogie figures rise to the surface where they're stopped on the head by noisy tumbles from Tilbury and Tippett, but the music is unable to move beyond vicious gestures and wavy patterns. The contemplative, sparse sounds of the two tracks labelled "Sorcerous" are more settling. With only one piano on the keyboard and the others playing auxiliary noises, a more diverse and revealing dialogue is provided. The starting point for "Being Prepared" are the timbre typical of Cage's Sonatas And Interludes, but this instrumental impersonation sets up a ravishing interpretation about which Cage would surely have made some rather terse comments.

Two briefer endpieces make a dynamic splash, but this is a very fine example of all concerned failing to deliver the goods.

THE WALLY SHOUP TRIO FUSILLADES & LAMENTATIONS

LEO LIRVING CD

SHOUP/FLAHERTY/MOORE/ CORSANO LIVE AT TONIC

LEO LIRVING CD

BY JULIAN CONWAY

Wally Shoup released his first album over 20 years ago, but the Seattle based alto saxophonist, painter and local musical activist has only recently become an audible presence on the larger free music scene. These Leo recordings confirm that he's highly skilled and articulate as well as an intense and powerful performer. *Fusillades & Lamentations* is an impressive studio recording with bassist Reuben Redding and drummer Bob Rees, younger musicians who lend enthusiasm and wise support. Both keep it close touch with the alto's movements, shadowing and embossing. Rees is animated and clearly loving it. Redding responding thoughtfully to the continuous challenge of invention. Shoup, master and architect of the music, drives shapes and assemblies the varied phrases of each of the eight improvisations, and as the album's title indicates, he does slow and sad as well as fast and fierce.

Energy is parable, but Shoup's strength is that timbral urgency with the deliberateness of his phrasing and the solid yet far from obvious construction of his solos. His alto may shiver, snap and split notes with relish, but each statement conveys discipline and decisiveness. Technical control that comes from years of serious exploring ingenerates the unpredictability of his musical imaginations. He has stolen fire from the free jazz pantheon, but the voice forged with it is refreshingly own.

If Ayler and Cobain supplied craggy and illuminating energy at a vital stage of Shoup's development, he was also keenly aware of the glare of the Stooges. Gustav Thurston Moore's enthusiasm for Shoup's playing resulted in the musical alliance spearheaded on *Hiroshima Floyd* (*Subliminal 2000*). *Live At Tonic*, recorded in New York last September, takes a step farther into the ecstatic mark of raw noise. Shoup's horn is augmented with Paul Flaherty's blazing tenor and alto, with Chas Corsano on drums. At areas the old guys seem inclined to swap details, to converge in relatively hushed tones, and for a while they get away with it. Moore's preference is for scorching bursts of rasping creaking, sputtering eruptions and turbo belows of feedback. The whiners rise to the hair and cut loose. The music spreads out as internal forces, needs and pressures dictate, as the musicians find ways to cope with the experience of deep immersion in sound. Shoup's almanca is more apparent here than his design skills.

STUFF SMITH 1944-1946 STUDIO, BROADCAST CONCERT & APARTMENT PERFORMANCES

AB FABILE AIRSOUND 2CD

BY BEN WATSON

Releases on the AB Fabile label are driven by love, devotion and obsession. *Annotator*,



New available from Annotator

Ultra-red: *Asteroid Moon*

Mentalist is composed entirely from recordings made May Day, 2001 at demonstrations for immigrant rights in New York City. Using these recordings as a base, the band has added new material and original tracks as imagined workers' rights singing in style have freely evolved into a multi-layered tapestry of spontaneous contributions. This new-cutters' effort is a direct piecemeal action. Includes photo documentation of the demonstration plus an essay on Ultra-red, presented in English and Spanish

still available

David Daniell: *set in stone*
largely abstract landscapes in which space is a
biased given.
David Daniell

Need *Windows*: experimental patterns avoid
factual and obvious in equal measure.
The Wire

Percussioning:

John Workman: *string souk*
dense and subtle material electronics. Winner of
the 2001 Max Brand Prize, presented by the
Canadian Film Centre in New York City

Keijo Mäkinen: spectral *airless*
Co-House with Sigma Editions of Raster-
Notes field recordings

Allegorical Power series

1997 works onwards *atmosphere* beginning 1 June
the external structures of allegorical power
through media satirize, absurdly enhance
sense of credulity, and to end have nothing
to do with the real world, but are available to
the wire to the current aggression. By adding our
work to the excess of agendas contesting
electroacoustic power the current United
States government, the IMF, the WTO, and to
allowing a total sound in a political context that
represents the acts of aggression propagated by
electroacoustic power as they militarily or
politically expand and impose their laws
and ethics upon us, and to the extent that
we do adhere to systems of government and
subsequently lead to direct action. This series
represents, as radio work in the form of freely
downloadable MP3s, to provide a space for those
of us who are outside to the place where the
power is concentrated or warlike

Featuring, in the first Dispatch

Nilmini Basakci

Zbigniew Karkowski

Tv Pav

Need Thomas Windham

John Workman/Michael Heile

Nicolas

Teleia



The Compiler

Various artists: reviewed, rated, reviled

Many unhappy returns: The Birthday Party

Australian concert promoter Tim Pitman's *Tales From The Australian Underground: Singles 1976-1988* (Feel Presents Pty Ltd 136142 2xDVD) is a personal labour of love that has taken five years to put together. Compiled from his collection of homegrown 45s, independently released during the late 70s and 80s, Pitman presents an introduction to the neglected Australian punk rock scene, gathering together names both familiar and virtually unknown. Disc one kicks off with The Stooges-infected glamour and dolt of Radio Birdman, who set the stage for what follows: a passionately pounding set of alt rock reworkings that range from the snarled obsessions of The Saints and The Seancers through the new wave posturing of sub-Buzzcocks The Riptides and Blonde lay-savours Lipstick Killers, to the early Gothic growlings of The Birthday Party, whose "Happy Birthday" still sticks out like a freshly hamstrung thumb. Disc two features the more experimental rumble of groups such as the Riffids, Lighthouse Keepers and Dead Pretty, where an element of psychobilia is allowed to slyly burk the edges of the full-on rock rage elsewhere. Equally interesting is Hugo's record man "Dad," which is jettisoned out over a pulsating bassbeat and decked out with feedback sizzle and electric guitar fumbling; the result is something that could have originated in Peru USA's industrialized stamping ground Cleveland rather than some sunbaked provincial town in Co. Tia. That's vocalist Tim Perkins went on to form The Beasts Of Bearten, a blues digg group of some significance unfortunately not represented here. What Pitman has gathered together, however, is a fascinating audio archive of raw Australian rock that lassoes back, Nuggets-style, for those who missed hearing these groups the first time round. (EP)

As pointed out by audio curator Pet Cosie in the sleeve notes to his exemplary *Secret Museum Of Recorded Compositions*, society was king of the dawn of phonography. In the early 20th century, the business of peddling recorded music to the owners of recently invented turntables had yet to hardened into a rapid turnover of pop hits. Recording expeditions were dispatched by record companies of the day, both to claim foreign territories as clientele and to collect sounds from exotic realms. Further complicating the nascent "World Music" enterprise were competing "technologies offered by mid-film. As one company's discs were often incompatible with another's playback mechanism, record companies back in the day had all the more reason to assert their presence within a given marketplace. The Gramophone Company of London advanced ingenious hegemony in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the

end result of several recording series throughout the Russian Empire. One particular visit by German recording engineer Franz Hempel in 1909 proved the most fruitful. The best performances transcribed by Hanmer for the Gramophone Company's flat disc system have finally been resuscitated on the latest release from the British Library National Sound Archive.

Before The Revolution: A 1909 Recording Expedition In The Caucasus And Central Asia
By The Gramophone Recording Company (Topic T8921 CD) documents folk idioms from ten regions. Small instrumental ensembles featuring duduk flutes (their tenor made familiar through the contemporary popularity of Dvyan Gasparian) and the droll hand-drum sit comfortably next to chom and stringed cluter *virnasa*. Compiled and commendably annotated by Will Preston, *Before The Revolution* glows with the fresh sheen of a Grand Ole Opry show staged in the Balkans.

Though the disc abounds with examples of naivete, the quantum units of Persian music history, threaded through art and folk forms, it's the choral voices presented by Hanmer that command most attention. Nine choirs were recorded during its 1909 tour, all singing in local dialects. The Ossetian choir (recorded in Vlenskenko, the mid-point between the Caspian and Black Seas) sit and hold pitch with scientific precision. The performance of "Rudan Zarev Zengi" still evinces a hypnotic pull on the unsuspecting listener, a masterstroke of unseen architecture to rival the harmonic specificity and innovation of either The Every Brothers or La Monte Young's *Theatre Of Eternal Music*. Only a few mourners' exposure to these sweetly drowsy epistles the willingness of early recordings to not attack by mountain bands en route to audioning comparable ensembles.

As before claims made in the sleeve notes for the British Library's collection as "a living archive," the sonic resonance allows music to triumph over decay on every selection heard here. The shimmering pectorines of the choral, a hammered dalcimer from the Emirate of Bukhara, return their spectral glory. So do the voices of soloists such as Khorshid's sulful rheostat troubadour, Tag-Ishan Khajimelova. Before *Revolution* arrives a lone wail of vital cultures immediately prior to their extirpation during the Soviet era. Well beyond such academic considerations, however, this is music vibrant with invention and verve, drenched in tears and salt luminescent nearly a century down the line. (RJ)

Celebrating the tenth anniversary of John Zorn's *Masada, Ashen Voices In The Wilderness* (Topic T21712 2xDVD) is a collection of interpretations, by the cream of the New York downtown scene, of Zorn's *Masada* songbook,



which was originally envisaged as a mix of traditional Jewish melodies delivered in the style of Omete Coleman's groundbreaking quartet. The strength of Zorn's compositions is evident throughout this album, as they suffice an overwhelming variety of interpretations played on an equally vast range of instrumentation, conducted by a massive cast, who are all imaginative musicians and composers in their own right.

Having emended *Masada* pieces for both string trio and larger ensembles, Zorn must have been surprised and delighted by the sheer musical audacity on display. Tim Heit has the take of "Tannen" is as beautiful as it is highly intense, while Medea, Martin & Wood's version of "Ziphim" has the consistency of paint stripper Danny Zorn's incendiary soprano workout with Sarah on "Nevvah"; is placed next to Jewel in Eisenberg's launcing vocal reading of "Widars", while Rastan galaxia Madors' interpretation of "Widars" is contrasted with the violin, cello, bassoon and capon drum intensity of Dave's version of "Rokhah". Criticism has been leveled at the sheer size of the *Masada* cone (a fair One thousand albums and four live DVD outings, plus *Masada* guitars and the various string combination CDs to date), and over-exposure can leave the listener with mind-numbing indifference to compositional nuance, but *Masada* In The Wilderness goes a long way to redressing that balance. (CJ)

Hot Apollonius in Enschede was a vital centre for performance and exhibitions between 1980 and 1997. Paul Panhuysen, who ran the project with his wife Hélène, has compiled *Apolis And Maraya: An Anthology Of New Music Concerts* (APOLLO 090217/090218 2xDVD) as a fabuous memoir of the venue and its values 3B excepts, ranging from two and a half' to see and a half minutes, have been drawn from around 500 music and sound art occasions. Preservation of chronological order highlights the programme's extraordinary diversity and makes clear Panhuysen's disconcert as facilitator. He established Hot Apollonius as a vital node within an international network of investigative music making and actively encouraged exploratory acts within its spaces. That's fully realized in these recordings. The first disc opens with Denis Bailey duetting with cellist Enes Rejeboglu; the second ends with the digital twitting of Matt Redgley's electronic composition "Tutor Loops". Sounds in between range from natural electromagnetic discharges captured by Alvin Lucier to a string version of Rhys Chatham's "Notices No. 2" performed by Pet Kotla's SEM Ensemble, from Pauline Oliveros' oceanic meditations to the raw power of Bertrandus' sonorous meditations from the homemade percussion of Pierre Berthet and Bridget Roxana to the digital electronics of Carl Stone. Arnold Dreyblatt leads his Orchestra Of Extended Strings, Alvin Curran interacts with street recordings, Jon Jones activates his musical autumn, Jenny Humby assumes the guise of electronic shaman and Etienne Rodopski dances mysteriously. Voices heard include Carlos Santos, Phil Minton, hi BTsaw and Stanley Masić. Solo instrumentalists include reedman Ned Rothenberg, guitarists Jim O'Rourke, Elliott Sharp and Peter Iros, percussionist Fred Frith, violinist Katie Metheny and multi-instrumentalist Tokiwa Nasug. There's much more besides, although nothing居然ly from Panhuysen himself. Packaged with his customary care, it's a limited edition and it's terrific. (AJ)

Soon after Peter Kowald settled in New York, and too soon after his death, the great German bassist became involved with the city's annual Vision Festival. It is this fitting that *Vision: Live From The Vision Festival* (Thirsty Ear TH157133 CD), drawn from the 2002 programme, concludes with a Kowald solo. He was, after all, a visionary musician who saw beyond commonplace practices and pursued his own way of making music without compromise. That's why keeping with the Festival's principle: The preceding music is often potent, starting with Muuru playing Albert Ayler. This four quartet of equals brings together a tenor Jemeeel Moors, trumpeter Roy Campbell, bassist William Parker and drummer Rashad Becker. Diane Davey Bell is in punchy, then thunderous mood, with fluent commentary from Tyrone Brown's bass, Bassist Reggie Workman is prominent in the Karen Borca Quartet, a pilot for Borca's bassoon dialogue with Rob Brown's alto while drummer Hweyene Taylor-Easter keeps busy. The Billy Bang trio's contribution finds the violinist's quirky hoodoo posed on a threshold between Hasnett Blaauw's piano, glockenspiel and Jim Hi Kim's spans, spry kromming. Douglas Keane teeks horns with fellow reedmen Joseph Jarman and effervescent trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith, that threesome matched in strength by Parker's bass coupled with Horne Drake's drums, while Myra Melford searches for spores to stave off her koto. Peter Kossos faces a more oblique challenge in pianist Matthew Shipp's String Trio, negotiating between Shipp's stacked weight and violin player Mat Maneri's jagged edginess. Parker and Drane subside into gentleness to lend support for Ellen Christ's wordless vocalizing and Rolf Sturm's moody reverberant electric piano, and they get funky on demand alongside veteran tenor Kidd Jordan and Fred Anderson. A collection of highlights documenting the expansiveness and flexibility that is vital to Vision. (AJ) □

Reviewed by Julian Cowley, John Crutchley, Richard Henderson and Edwin Pouncey

Researcher and discographer Anthony Bennett dedicates jazz and improvised violin, and he will follow the recorded traces of jazz violinist Staff Smith to the ends of the earth. Born Hezekiah Levey Gordon in Portsmouth, Ohio in 1900, Staff Smith started out with Jelly Roll Morton and made his name playing at the Orpheum in New York in 1944, on the cusp between swing, novelty and bebop. Smith was unattractable. After Fats Waller's death he took over his band; fresh from Kashin in 1957, Dizzy Gillespie introduced Smith to some of the scales he'd learned in the East, and the pair recorded "Rio Polkasten" together. In other words, Smith was a wail maniac, unconstrained by notions of genre.

The two discs here are named Desert Sands and Up Jumped The Devil. Sound quality is rigorously faithful to the source, which ranges from lecture transcriptions to 78 rpm pressings and magnetic tape. Not designed for the casual listener, Bennett creates a special world where you must adopt his own fascination for the minutiae of Staff Smith's legacy. Often readers from past eras emulate the style of the period, evoking the stakes used by heritage exhibitions or theme restaurants. Here, recordings and photographs are presented like curiosities in a collector's cabinet, in elegant stinkers. You must study each track, appreciate every mark.

Staff Smith's violin playing is fast, witty, extraordinarily flexible. There are two duets here with the classical pianist Robert Crumb, who closed the line by playing boogie-woogie. Perhaps Bennett's claim that their experimental encounters ("hearsay") anticipated free improvisation is a little far-fetched, but there is much that will fascinate musicologists here. Smith plays most impressively with snappy jazz rhythm sections, where his astounding harmonic intelligence is squeaked and pestered, and he cannot get by with Plain Court flippantly or sentimentally.

Bennett wisely finishes the collection with "Up Jumped The Devil", a recording which was announced in Down Beat or in August 1945, but never surfaced on vinyl (it may have been broadcast on the radio or printed on sheet music). The song is humorous, and concerns the ineluctable pressure of bodily drives and their interference with conscious wishes. It's a wonderful distillation of the net argument of blues and jazz — not to say the rock and hip hop they gave birth to — and deserves to be broadcast everywhere.

DI SPOOKY THAT SUBLIMINAL KID DUBTOMETRY

THRIFTY EAT THRIFTIES CD
BY STEVE BARBER

The original album, of which this is the dub, appeared late last year in respectful tangent to the Thrifty Eat Blue Series, committed to a re-exploitation of jazz now. Maybe that was the intention, but the best playing on that album, which matched DJ Spooky with jazz players, still sounded a lot like guys "doin' it". That's why the tunes mostly came off so lachrymose carrying the load of Spooky's other laboured nü-dialect in their titles and the elaborate supporting notes. Perhaps the whole could be re-visited too?

This is a set of dub companion as such. On Dubtometry, friends and collaborators were

invited to create new versions from the tracks of their choice. The presence of Lee Perry and his longest lasting collaborator, the Mad Professor, is of little consequence here, although their names are slightly embossed on the cover art. Perry, on ususal form, manages to rhyme "Jubilee" with "Innuendo" before trailing off into the fade. The eminent Prof's contribution is unclear apart from the interlude that bears his name.

The brittle noise that opens up Dr Gack's intro sets the claustrophobic levels that pervade the rest of the album. "Doubtometry" lacks the swing and space of the original in a trade-off for more, unnecessary, ideas. It appears the accepted strategy for the club mix has been reversed, rather than stripping channel's ost, new layers have been added. Taken individually some of the tools here may stand up, but Huw's take on "Opportunity" fails to bring up Daniel Bernhard Roman's solo violin in the mix. Its resemblance to John Coltrane's solos on the Velvet Underground's "Black Angel's Death Song" is striking, and Huw could have also made more of the phat synth bass riff that opened the original. Samples from Miley Cyrus's over-played "American Anthem" recur through the mixes refreshingly.

"Porchosis" dubs out Nipponese's rip, but on the downside, Joe McPhee's great free sax break is dropped too low. The Twilight Circus mix on "Voodoo Cybemobile" finds Ryne Moore tuning in his twin experimental and dub roots. The set's most lyrical piece, it features a gently mushing rhythmic over which McPhee gets cerebral on trumpet, Geneva's DJ Groov's "Opportunity" into its own "Bomb Mix" and gets more into breakbeat cut 'n' paste territory, but ultimately it's just another remix. Other cuts come from Spooky's collaborator I-Sound, Colorado, Negativland (a mess) and Animal Crocodiles.

NATSUKI TAMURA QUARTET HADA HADA

URIM TAHO CD
BY PHIL FREEMAN

This collaboration between trumpeter Natsuki Tamura and his wife, keyboardist Satoko Fujii, is a rolling storm of sound, often beautiful but never placid. Tamura's trumpet is fed through pedals, but he's hardly imitating Miles Davis's wah-wah wails of the early 1970s. He operates the track blipping like a Civil Defense alarm and rarely lets up. Behind him, Fujii (switching from her usual piano to synthesizer) and guitarist Takeaki Kata end a fortress of thick chords, filling every crevice of the mix with resonating tones until the two are functioning like one giant, vibrating horn. The only player whose contribution is constantly apparent is drummer Takeaki Mausou. He, too, employs electronics as weapons, his drums crash like trash cans hurled from five stories up.

It's inaccurate to suggest that the record is all of a piece, though. The swooshing of the title track is countered by the second cut's leghem and half-sucky human voices muttering in the background. Aptly called "The Incident", it sounds like a snippet from the score to a horror film, with Flyby's dissonant keyboard stabbing the rhythmic pattern like she's trying to hit every third beat from the drum solo on Iron Butterfly's "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida". Tamura, for his part, favours electrified blare over speedy streams of notes. On "Usage", meanwhile, Kata's guitar duel with

Fujii's funeral pipe organ sounds like a death battle between Lou Reed and La Monte Young. This music doesn't swing, it stamps. Hada Hada delts quite comfortably in the realms of pure sonic desolation, like smooth jazz tempered by Merzbow Electronic or otherwise, no other jazz record has been so set on repeatedly and wilfully disturbing the listener.

TIBETAN RED/VICTOR NUBLA

TAO POINT

HIRONAKI MC-1000 SERIES VOL 1 CD

VICTOR NUBLA

ANTICHON

HIRONAKI GLPT-001 TAKEDA MAGNOLIA GMH-1000 CD

BY ANDY HAMILTON

Something of a cult sound artist in his native Spain, Victor Nuba is a paradoxical talent on the evidence of these two discs. Tao Point was recorded at Muñoz Pineda, Spain, and its pattern is soon clear. Essentially it's an explosion of instant, slowly changing low end drones, till the dancing minute or se of each track, when higher-pitched and more dynamic activity intrudes. On "Teight Point", the sound descends low enough to be quite disorienting. "Worm Point" is the oral equivalent of an immersion in ammonia fluid, with gently oscillating drones for most of its 16 minutes, before industrial sounds are briefly introduced. The result is an eerie, disturbing piece of Industrial/Ambient soundart.

Antichon is more ambitious, but sadly reveals that Nuba is not so adept in his handling of orchestral resources. Recorded live in Barcelona, it features Nuba on samplers and modified clavirons, Raposo's Robs Stovey on sampler and "small instruments", and other musicians contributing percussions, samples and effects. The instrumental writing and/or playing is clichéd, and electronic effects are just that — burbling synths, thunderstorms, dripping water, vinyl squeak. This is klatch and should be avoided.

TERRE THAEMLITZ

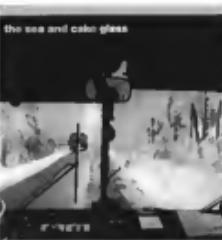
LOVEBOOMB

MILLE PLATEAUX MPH 107 CD

BY ANNE HILDE NESET

Transgendered electroacoustic composer Terre Thaemlitz's latest venture is an attack on all-embracing human emotion called Love. The record is a complex and beautiful composition collaging artful manifesto, dialogues descending into screams, political bombast, subtle electronic textures, melancholy whimping piano, multi-layered choirs, sampled soul cues, true Blue County teen brass bends, lo-fi riffs, 80s disco samples, Morris code bleeps, snatches of conversation, squawking toys and machine gun rattle.

There's quite some sonic vocabulary Thaemlitz uses for an album whose 14 tracks are essentially interrogating — albeit each in a different way — the slogan "all we need is love". Love, he says, has its dark and destructive side: love for the fatherland breeding fascism, religious love precipitating domestic violence, religious love cultivating factionalism and terrorism. In its ongoing role as unequal dichotomies for love, meanwhile, music blindly peddles love platitudes. Thaemlitz's own artwork for Lovebomb links a line-drawing connecting the names of 9/11 and the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo underground beneath a gaily pastel



Four new songs plus remixes by

STEREOLAB, BROADCAST

+ CARL CRAIG

Plus! An Enhanced disc featuring

the "Sound and Vision" video
animated by Richard McGuire
of Liquid Liquid

THE SEA AND CAKE GLASS

thrill-125 cd

THE LONESOME ORGANIST ONE MAN BAND



David Bowie and Tom Waits endorsed, The Lonesome Organist is a One Man Band Extravaganza CD Includes Special "Movie" Flipbook

THE LONESOME ORGANIST FORMS AND FOLLIES

thrill-126 cd

out now on
thrill jockey records
www.thrilljockey.com

The Boomerang

New reissues: rated on the rebound

Militant tendency: Max Roach

Max Roach's Agent (Get Back GET2021 2XLP) is well named, consisting of 1960 and 1961 European road tapes of two different outfit led by the great bebop drummer. For this double vinyl release, the Italian Adesiva label have licensed the recordings from Charly in London, who issued them on their Allivity label in 1980. Roach's status wasn't high among record buyers back then, so the Allivity album was rapidly remastered, which meant that unemployed students of the black nationalist revolution could pick them up at a reasonable price. Get Back has used extremely heavy vinyl, though the photograph of Roach has suffered, and now has a slightly ominous, vampire, dishevelled, Mano Dava-style bitterness.

The music has the hectic and fluid quality of festival jazz, when musicians reproduce hard bop — fundamentally a studio music, and best caught by Augie Van Gelder — for large, appreciative audiences. Roach works well with bassist Bob Beaubien; and the Tornados (sax and drums) and Julian Priester (trumpet) make a front-line front. The title group is an intriguing one: a quartet with Eddie Khan on bass, pianist Colenidge Perkinsou, who conducted the choir for Roach's epochal live *Time* in 1962, and tenor saxophonist Clifford Jordan. Perkinsou plays quirky impulsive piano and Roach treats the audience to Harry Belafonte's "Mop Mop", a drum solo which focuses on the martial rhythms which underlie top drums. Jordan stands well, but when he stretches out he sounds like he's paraphrasing recent solos by Coltrane. On three songs the quartet is joined by Alcyde Lear at his most lugubrious, accompanied by the guitar similes of The Velvet Underground's "I Heard Her Call My Name"; with hindsight, this album epitomises the Kevin Ayres oeuvre: the jazzy, the sublime and the throwaway all play their part. His somewhat buffering unevenness contributes to his charm. Sadly, the latter is in short supply on 1973's *Bananahead* (EMI 582772 CD). Though it opens with the jagged catshat-up scenario of "Way 17", the album's overall mood is darker, featuring late cut-ups and some crazy freeform excursions.

Released the following year, the eclectic *Whalehuntingbeweising* (EMI 5827782 CD) starts with a mini-suite for group and orchestra arranged by Bedford, running through a pastoral ballad, a 1920s pastiche and on to the churning, looped rhythms of "Song From The Bottom Of A Well", which comes across as something like Eddie Lear at his most lugubrious, accompanied by the guitar similes of The Velvet Underground's "I Heard Her Call My Name". With hindsight, this album epitomises the Kevin Ayres oeuvre: the jazzy, the sublime and the throwaway all play their part. His somewhat buffering unevenness contributes to his charm. Sadly, the latter is in short supply on 1973's *Bananahead* (EMI 582772 CD). Though it opens with the jagged catshat-up scenario of "Way 17", the album's overall mood is darker, featuring late cut-ups and some crazy freeform excursions.

Released the following year, the eclectic *Whalehuntingbeweising* (EMI 5827782 CD) starts with a mini-suite for group and orchestra arranged by Bedford, running through a pastoral ballad, a 1920s pastiche and on to the churning, looped rhythms of "Song From The Bottom Of A Well", which comes across as something like Eddie Lear at his most lugubrious, accompanied by the guitar similes of The Velvet Underground's "I Heard Her Call My Name". With hindsight, this album epitomises the Kevin Ayres oeuvre: the jazzy, the sublime and the throwaway all play their part. His somewhat buffering unevenness contributes to his charm. Sadly, the latter is in short supply on 1973's *Bananahead* (EMI 582772 CD). Though it opens with the jagged catshat-up scenario of "Way 17", the album's overall mood is darker, featuring late cut-ups and some crazy freeform excursions.

Released the following year, the eclectic *Whalehuntingbeweising* (EMI 5827782 CD) starts with a mini-suite for group and orchestra arranged by Bedford, running through a pastoral ballad, a 1920s pastiche and on to the churning, looped rhythms of "Song From The Bottom Of A Well", which comes across as something like Eddie Lear at his most lugubrious, accompanied by the guitar similes of The Velvet Underground's "I Heard Her Call My Name". With hindsight, this album epitomises the Kevin Ayres oeuvre: the jazzy, the sublime and the throwaway all play their part. His somewhat buffering unevenness contributes to his charm. Sadly, the latter is in short supply on 1973's *Bananahead* (EMI 582772 CD). Though it opens with the jagged catshat-up scenario of "Way 17", the album's overall mood is darker, featuring late cut-ups and some crazy freeform excursions.

Complaints will be plowed to know that all the other tracks, B sides and more from Ayres's long-dated *Old Duties* compilation are spread across these discs, although not necessarily tucked onto the appropriate albums. These include some real gems, formed by Bedford's glorious piano and cor anglais ensemble, Ayres's cut with Bright St John, "John Madman" (not Bloating At The Moose) is one of his very best recordings. On the other hand the same album now carries "Hail (Like 4)", a gurning-slow session of almost unbearable wackiness. The 1969 track "Religious Experience", made flesh on Joy Of A Roy, features the one and only guitar siren Syd Barrett playing outside his solo studio with Pink Floyd. (ML)

Kevin Ayres began recording his debut solo album, *Joy Of A Roy* (EMI 5827762 CD), in June 1969 as the cap of the psychedelic and progressive era. At that time the signs were simultaneously pointing towards pop music and more adventurous sonic experimentation. This was the perfect place for Ayres to set out his stall, as his music took off in both directions at once. EMI's massive programme of his first four albums — originally released on their Prog subsidiary Hornead — covers his most fertile period. The young Ayres was a strikingly handsome anarchist and bon vivant, who possessed an obsessively warm, if limited, baritone voice; a beguiling image for any era. The maturing of these CDs has produced a far more vivid sound than previous reissues, and

even before AWI's incessant global touring inflated demand for Mainliner output, their 1966 debut album quickly sold out its original limited run on Mason Jones's Camelot Music label. Now reissued to accompany its first time round on vinyl, *Mellow Out (Not Season RESPONSIBILITY)* (CD/LP) withstands its renewed availability with its formidable reputation intact. Accompanied by drummer Haynes Kozumi, Nasjo and Kawabata hit maximum velocity from the off and sustain it over the 35 sprawling minutes of its three tracks, "Coskogram", "Black Sky" and "M". For all its crushing momentum, the music's impact is still more exhilarating than oppressive, as Kawabata's self-designed monophony guitar voices gnarled and knotted web of thundering reverbs easily illuminate with brilliant magisterial flashes of light, that alternately absorb the impact and catch the fallout of Nuno's demolition bass. Stylistically, Mainliner might reference the comedown moment when psychadelic collapsed into stoner metal, but their inventiveness are entirely other. Reassessing the lead, leaden lug of Blau Chew's doowop rock, Mainliner give it legs and let it run and run. (BN)

More than any other 60s UK folk artist, singer-songwriter and guitarist **Bert Jansch** deserved to be recognised as the British equivalent to Bob Dylan. Spurned from the folk boom that took root across the 1960s folkies and cellar clubs throughout the mid-60s, Jansch would go on to form the folk trio Pentangle with John Renbourn and singer Jackie McShee. However, his solo work overshadows any success he enjoyed as a member of that group, with a string of albums that pushed the folk music movement forward and nudged an embryonic electric folk rock scene into the open. His most influential recording from this period is his third album *Jasa Oren* (Larmark 42007 LP), which adopted the traditional folk music approach without destroying the fruits of its labour. Instead Jansch adds new arrangements to old favourites like "The Waggoners Lad", "Nethamton Town" and "Henry Martin", stretching out the songs until they metamorphose into a kind of jazz poetry, as on the title track, a ten minute jam with Renbourn on acoustic guitar, where the testling of Jansch's own slowly unfurling the folk equivalent of "Love Supreme". (EP)

The late 60s San Francisco outfit **François Baoderwisch** took their name from a line from Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem "Jabberwocky". Their sole offering to the psychadelic rock revolution was a three track EP which quickly disappeared and has since become a holy grail item in record collector circles. Goliath Saws Of Love (The Studio Outtakes) (Goliath 67624 LP) is a gloriously coloured and enlarged version of this priceless vinyl artifact, which will hit psych fans as a revelation of sorts, as few will have heard the original EP what they'll hear is a



tightly knit rock outfit with Quicksilver Messenger Service's improvisational leanings. Despite being fuelled on the assualt concoction of dope and magic mushroom chit — to which they add acid addled adaptations of Alice's Adventures In Wonderland — François Baoderwisch emerge as a potent and imaginative force who weren't around long enough to realise their full potential. (EP)

Long before he formed Santana, guitarist Jason Vieaux, together with Peter Kember (aka Sonic Youth), founded 80s space rock unit **Spectrum 3**, whose importance as an influence on today's drone rock cannot be disputed. Their greatest record, *The Perfect Presto* (1987) is a drugged out blaze of stoner psychadelic and bouncy blues licks that goes way beyond the usual garage rock reimaginings and paisley peacock poppings that were all agueur at the time. *Forged Prescriptions* (Space Age Recordings ORIENT006CD 2002) features the original tracks and goes on to extend the experience with an extra disc of demos and unreleased tracks from the sessions. At the time, many of these extras were considered too difficult to replicate live, and had to be reduced so that they could be taken out on the road. The Perfect Presto songs retain their unique hypnotic quality with "Walking Like Jesus" and "Transparent Radiation" being two major highlights. However, they're even more impressive in their elongated versions alongside the unreleased material on the extra disc, where the group's streamlined guitar licks become tangled in a seemingly endless cosmic blue loop which makes time stand still. (EP)

In September 1968, alto saxophonist **Trevor Watts** took a short trip along the Sussex coast from his Hastings home to play at the Rye Festival with his group Non-Stop Music. With One Voice (WVR 1081 1002 CD) captures that utilising performance. Originally issued on Watts's own ABC label, it reappears with an additional track, "Themes For America No 4", although the packaging keeps that secret. Like the openly declared first and second pieces from the "Themes" series, written for a tour of the US and Canada, it buzzes energetically with cross-cultural references that are remarkably held in shape by tight ensemble discipline. This memorable Monk incarnation has Sam Pickard on tenor, Veryan Weston (piano), Richard Granville-Smith (accordion) and Liane Carroll adding further keyboards plus neatly integrated vocalising. Colin Gleeson plays bass, Liam Genockey drums and learned African percussionists Nana Toliboe and Reff Adu keep the carefully patterned rhythms whirling. The remaining piece "Head We Ever Say Goodbye" has something of the interwar dignity of Duke Ellington And The Bluesboys. Overall, joyful sounds abound. (AC) □ Reviewed by Mike Barnes, Julian Cawley, Bibi Kopf, Edwen Pounsey and Ben Wilson

colourwash that makes the CD look like it's targeted at Japan's teenage lolicon girl market. Applying the sleeve's colour code, the artwork's equation of teen love and tenorism resolves as expressions of fascism. Thaenitz plays on examples of love gone wrong even before you get to the music.

Delivered as a confessional whisper over murky orchestral sweeps, this title track reveals a now-teenager's school days dogging apart from his classmates who "nicknamed him Kid Bucket." The aptly named "Between Empire And Sympathy Is Time," opens with a machine gun riff that dissipates into the sain, vocoded and resigned call to arms of an ANC spokesperson urging members to take revenge on white oppressors: "Sintesi Musicale Del Lingaggio Futurista" is an evolutionary multi-layered composition linking Marinetti's Futurist manifesto, H. G. Wells' "Strange Case" and an account of three black men being castrated in Springfield, Missouri – Thaeleritz's hometown – in 1908.

Variously skewed, buckled and twisted, Theenritz's compositions embody the tensions camping by the love muscle. Yet pain, conflict, paradox and contradiction make up the muck and silt out of which rounded love in all its sordidness sheets forth. As Theenritz puts it in his extensive sleeve notes: "Rather than songs of love and unity I long for audits of love's incommutable differences." The point is rammed home on the CD's six-minute bonus track, where the mantra, "change it, change your love," is endlessly repeated over a slinky House rhythm passed by a thumping beat. Ending his complex investigations of loves on such a note camp is evidently in keeping with Theenritz's enduring love of ambivalence.

TOMAHAWK

MIT GAS
IPFCAC IPFCAB CD

BY TOM RIDGE

What with veterans from Helmet, Jesus Lizard and Melvins in their ranks, not to mention Mike Patton on vocals, Temahawk are possibly being iconic when they call themselves "a rock 'n' roll supergroup," because they're certainly more about upsetting expectations than pandering to them. DK, the full throttle opener "Bedlam," explodes into action, crashes awhile and then slows to a menacing lug, but that's a relatively static statement it's a one off. Thereafter things grow altogether less predictable.

On "Drugs This Day," the unison established by Hall & Oates' drummer John Davis's woken-up hedging drumming is undermined by jazzy harmonica. "You Can't Win" combines wal-walh bass noise then rocks out to a mutated bluesy groove; "Copt Me Right" finds the quartet negotiating a complex set of manoeuvres somewhere between森瑟 jazz funk, explosive death angled and careening pools of calm, laying down its idiot-saint role to the hit, "Smile." Peart's voice fluctuates between conspiratorial crooning, beatish yelps and hard rock histrionics, all usually with a single song. Jean-Louis Gurin guitars Duane Denman matches his mouthfuls, while Temahawk's numberly yet interlockingly see-saw between bawfulness and balls-out rock.

Largely driven by a powerful but versatile rhythm section completed by Melvin Bassett on bass and Tomaszewski on drums, Temahawk's music is as brutal as it is eclectic, but it's also a little smarmy,

WINSTON TONG

MISERERE
MULTUM CD

Performance artist Whistler Tong is probably best remembered for his involvement with 1980s electroclash art rockers Koozimoon. The previously unreleased *Misereor* (*Misery*) is Tong's score to Belgian choreographer Pieter Drolsma's modern ballet, based on the story of Ophelia and her death and their descent into the underworld. In collaboration with Persian born dancer and vocalists Sussan Deyhim, Tong's French language interpretation of the mythological tale is performed entirely by electronically treated voices.

Wiseman somewhat resembles the physical sound poetry of Henri Chopin. His beats and rhythms are made up from repeated breathing exercises, grunts, laughter and other body noise. This is particularly effective when the spoken text overlaps into the more abstract sounds of the other performers to create a feeling of the natural and the supernatural worlds coming together. The result is a compelling sound journey into the dark soul of the Breton legend.

CHRISTIAN WALLUMRØD
SOFIENBURG VARIATIONS

www.venus.com.ph

When Norwegian pianist Christian Wallumrød first heard Paul Bley's recordings from the 1960s, he realised he no longer needed to play "clever".

lives over predictable chord sequences. My impression is that conversational jazz harmony just fell away". The result, on Sollefteå Variations, has been described as "soothsayer from an inner landscape, with not a trace of nostalgia" – music that belongs as much to modern composition as jazz, and mostly written not improvised. The music is grooveless and proceeds at a glacial pace, as the tracks work through its eight themes and seven variations, including two on "Sorbanne Nouvelle", a rarely banquette dance slowed to a halting tempo – maybe the title only suggests a motor bike tour on the organ, like nuoq's relationship to traditional tarje.

M WARD
THE TRANSFIGURATION OF
VINCENT
ANTIQUITY RECORDS

MY BAN PITMAN

With regard to a

and helped well

and better life.

conjecture we all know a little bit about that these days, whether it's just a face you knew and loved from the movie screen jumping to his death because something in him snapped again, or whether it's M Ward and the someone is a friend he knew and loved, and couldn't for whatever reasons help, and now they are gone and remembrance is all that remains.

I'm not sure we're meant to talk like this in music reviews any more, or if we ever were. But if we sit around waiting for music's New Revolution, we'll still be waiting when someone sits down to make a record about each of us like Transformation Of Vincent M Ward is like one of these voices you sometimes find on a Website, where you can't make out if this person is a prophet or a fool, but no matter, it's fresh, unfiltered, without any kind of nervousness... it

outlaw material reward or just a certain mood. N'Ward gets us music that is a conveyor of darks and down, but buoyed up by a strangely light, uncannily gossamer tone. Ward doesn't use his friend's pen as an excuse to park our heads down under some Gothic fog that insinuates the desire to be perceived as a deeply wasted artist. It's some of his more upbeat songs, like "Dutta My Head," that bring me to the verge of tears here. "Dead Man" is measured and microscopically slow, but with a hauntingly jaunty Nik Drake-ish chorus which I actually wake up singing, it's so nappily catchy Ward's voice can be high or lowly, like this record's tone in general, as it switches from swing, twangy or dark waltzes. Rather than during a job lot of dark words on us, Ward sings about killer whales and whoopiepoos, negating the dumb equanimity, low tones equal giddiness and songs. Ward makes these lyrics here more genuine because he knows we are creatures of confusion, that our friends can make us happy and sad.

I'm not saying this is some great metallica album of the year, but it would also be a mistake to hear this as simple to fit division. It was indeed generally received in a low key, but it's not some wave; eerie, translucent, muddy, delicate, almost at times subduedly, daube, wisps, shadows, a sparrow with hidden paradise wings. The chorus of "If You're Going To Leave" or the mesh around of "Duet For Guitars 3" or the back patch teeth of "Inevitability" or the hop-skip, like whoof of "Helicopter" are simple but vivid things, like John Fisher off by himself on "A Bicycle Built For Two" or a Jack Mileske score composed in a basement size.

On what is perhaps Ward's coup de théâtre, he takes on David Bowie's "Let's Dance." It would have been easy to make this same indie-drip homie joint let's put the knowing knife in and suck all the slick life out of the song's dress-up-down-clown 1980s schlock optimism. But Ward doesn't, his "Let's Dance" sounds more like Townes Van Zandt stepping into the warmth of one more bottled abyss.

But this Transformation leaves you feeling strangely elated, not hollow. This is a day right off the seal record, a distant country dream of Young's Righteous The Night, but it feels flooded with light and air and space. Its words are often dry, plain, painful ("Take me under, undertake, take me over..."), but this isn't self-pry or tub thumping; number blues by blue numbers. In fact it's an odd little beachful of spring(s), a lifting of weight(s), an eternal flutter. □

CD
SWEET & VIOLENT
Rob Mazurek

FRANKENSTEIN

Meggs 067 COH: 3
ELECTRIC ELECTRONS
L'ÉNERGIE EST EN VILLE
Meggs 068 (la Gold: REGRETTÉ (?) RIEN? 2xCD)
C'est un peu comme Prendre la route de l'Amour
Meggs 069 (la Gold: REGRETTÉ (?) RIEN? 2xCD)
C'est un peu comme Prendre la route de l'Amour
Meggs 070 (la Gold: REGRETTÉ (?) RIEN? 2xCD)
C'est un peu comme Prendre la route de l'Amour
Frida Ostremayed KITSCH CONCRETE
Meggs 071 159

MEGO WWW.MEGO.AT
MEGO-Vertriebsgesellschaft
GmbH & Co. KG
Sternstraße 11 • 1010 Wien/Austria
T 01/520 00 00 • F 01/520 00 01
E-mail: info@meego.at

Yasunao Tone / PALIMPSEST | CD
Hecker:
http://www.yasunao-tone.jp

Avant Rock

Reviewed by Edwin Pouncey

FORT DAX

FOLLY

TUGBOAT TUG003 CD

Found sounds, music box melodies, the occasional human falsetto vocal and plenty of bedroom studio synthesizer stabbing are the basic ingredients that have gone into making this intriguing piece of work. Housed in a cover that is designed to look like a sumptuous art object, Fort Dax's Folly is an oddity that falls somewhere between 70s Krautrock and a John Carpenter soundtrack, with maybe just a hint of Philip Jeck's tasteful manipulation thrown in for good measure. This strange and slightly disturbing set of giddy instrumental tableaux, haunted harmonies and samples of electronic explosions are intriguing to say the least.

GODFLESH

MESSIAH

RELAPSE RHE04 CD

Godflesh's awesome, bone splintering guitar, bass and machine rumble was tuned up a notch on the long sought after Messiah EP to reach new heights of Maniac Metal hallucination. Recorded in 1994 and made available only through the group's official Website, Messiah quickly descends into legend as leader and guitarists Justin Broadbent disbanded Godflesh in 2002 to pursue his own solo career. All of the original four songs that made up that original artefact are present, together with freshly hacked remixes which give a new dimension and direction to the group's laudable and penetrating technical rock vision of a world gone horribly wrong.

CHARLES HAYWARD

ABRACADABRA INFORMATION

LOCUS SOLUS 1000 CD

Former This Heat drummer Charles Hayward's first solo recording for eight years is a set of four songs and two instrumentals on which he also plays tapes, percussion, melodeon and keyboards. His arrangements for these are perfectly acceptable when he surrounds his solidly paced drumming with a variety of alternative rhythms and effects, but as soon as Hayward begins to sing a feeling of inner dread takes over. It sounds here as though Hayward has a passion singing and drumming at the same time. Lyrically the songs are somewhat squat, indistinct, so as the voice is a grating, raw threated scratch, you might wonder why he continues to sing. However the instrumentals make a much more satisfying set of moodily drowsing drum paintings that thrash with rhythmic colour.

JE SUIS FRANCE

FANTASTIC AREA

ORANGE TWIN NO NUMBER CD

Je Suis France (aka "The French") are a fine piece from Athens, Georgia whose list of influences include Gang Of Four, Superchunk, Neutral Milk Hotel and Guided By Voices. What they really sound like, though – particularly on the opening title track and the closing "Hasta Violence" – is Bad Moon Rising-era Social Youth. This is no bad thing, especially as over the course of Fantastic Area

they find their own sound, when they lash out a slew of high energy rockers. These range from the full-on attack of "Memorial Day" to the more subdued, thoughtful and experimentally arranged "Live To Win" and "Space Rules", where The French reveal that they have plenty of ideas and the power to convincingly push them along.

KINN

KINN

1976-1978 VARIOUS CD

German guitarist Frank Schöglöf Blümner and bassist Manfred Turckwsky's Kinn project follows the styles of such artists as John Fahey, Geste Del Sol, Lemminkäinen and The Heat, with a hint of Steve Reich and Erik Satie's loopy minimalism thrown in for good measure. Kinn is a delight that recent parents of Steffen Bähn-Jungmann and the rest of the recent experimental guitar solo scene will find irresistible. Seated by Turckwsky's simple and expressive bass work, discreetly tempered with electric effects, Blümner's technique of allowing space to become an integral part of his playing style gives the music room to breathe and sink into the atmosphere. Rather than ending up as just another Ambient exercise, Kinn's rich palette of different tones and worldly musical influences ensure listeners stay on their toes.

THE LIFE PARTNERS

PARTNERS FOREVER

TWISTED VILLAGE TW107 CD

What higher recommendation could any young aspiring group hope for than to get a big thumbs up on their press releases from legendary 1980s rock entrepreneurs Kim Fowley, who certainly knows a good thing when he hears it. The Life Partners may not be in the same league as The Runaways or Helen Reddy (two of Fowley's former finds), but their lighthearted loathing together of James Chance and The Electro Cops with something that sounds like its tail is on fire bears all the markings of future greatness.

MALADE DE SOUCI

MMMM BBAA

NO STONES N510 CD

Malade De Souci are a Prog punk trio from St Louis, but they could just as easily hail from Osaka, as their high speed, torku-like punk punk rock resembles early Boboiboyz on hyperactive overdrive. Never thought I could say this about a CD that contains 92 songs – but this is short, sweet, snappy and a lot of fun.

MOGWAI

HAPPY SONGS FOR HAPPY PEOPLE

PAS PASSESS CD

glaswegian instrumental rock group Mogwai are adept at putting up pleasant enough musical wallpaper that goes straight up and down without causing offence. Sound track and the flowery patterns they carefully piece together from song to song merge into a whole where you can no longer see the joints because the separate tracks. Occasionally a part might peel off to temporarily spoil the effects, and these

turn out to be the best bits. Unfortunately they happen all too rarely.

MY CAT IS AN ALIEN

OUT OF THE BLUE – INTO THE WHITE

OPRAH DOT SXCD-R

THE COSMOLOGICAL EYE

TRILOGY PART ONE: INTO THE SLEEPING BEAUTY GALAXY

GPX 006 CD

Italian DJ space rockers My Cat Is An Alien's compact release schedule continues with a triple CD set and the first part of a new recording project, that by its title, is attempting to attract Sun Ra worshippers to their cause. Out Of The Blue – Into The White is an enormous sprawl of apocalyptic wailing, Tony Conrad-concocted violin screeps and farling drum and cymbal work. Most of it is atmospheric and sleepless, but not without a certain name chime, "PUNK IT LOUD!" they demand on the slip of paper that passes for a cover, but even at low volume MODA manage to get their message through. More structured is the first part of their Cosmological Eye trilogy where deep cosmic drones radiate out and sympathetic guitar chord structures are randomly dropped in to create a sense of auroral hypnosis. Complete with hand painted handbilled art cover and Xerox insert, the production takes on the mordre of a release from Satam.

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

ELECTRIC VERSION

MATADOR CL0591 CD

Vancouver's New Pornographers are a power pop sextet led by singer, songwriter and guitarist Carl Newman, with additional writing and vocal assistance from secret member Dan Bejar. Their songs are predictably packed with enough catchy hooks to pull you into a well of upbeat optimism – complete with quirky lyrics wrapped around "coh-oh-oh" chorusing – but there is nothing to really grab hold of in order to stop yourself from falling into a carefree state while waiting for these pop pompos to stomp the dirt – or at least something rocking enough to make a mess.

SUNDIAL

ZEN FOR SALE

ACME NO NUMBER CD

Occasional Current 93 guitarist Gary Ramon reacquaints himself with his own high flying group, Sundial, to drop a new collection of upstaged psychedelic pop and rock anthems like an organic food aid package from the gods. Zen For Sale runs the gamut of 1960s and 70s psychadelic rock styles, from the Barrett-era Raydays space rock dive of "Open Your Eyes" to the bad and electronic art rock splutter of "Add Test", or one of them split out with a style and a knowledge that clearly reveal Ramon as a master of his craft.

VAN OEHLLEN

ROCK & ROLL IS HERE TO DIE

BLUE SPONGE BC10 CD

German metal brothers Albert and Merkusa Oehlken return with a second batch of bright bass beats,

deep-fried samples and a guest appearance from Mayo Thompson of Red Krayola, singing on three of their deliciously demented compositions.

Therpearl and Ian Cohl's collaboration is an edgy singalong, with "Jummer" sounding like every Odeonence Clearwater Revival's "Run Through The Jungle", while "Child" is a dispensary ditty that could have been scraped from the hull of Red Keophol's second album for International Artists. "R&R" comes out fighting with an elbowed keyboard solo, a vaguely familiar orchestral sample, dumb drums and Thompson's muffled declaration that "Rock and roll is here to die". After Van Geklen's mangling, rock 'n' roll has never sounded in better shape.

THE WARLOCKS

PHOENIX ALBUM

BIGDADDY BD0101 CD

Craising through the desert with a trunkload of liquor and hardknockers, *Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas* – that's the image conjured up by "Shake The Dope Out", the opening track on The Warlocks' Phoenix Album. Having California, The Warlocks have been compared with groups such as The Velvet Underground and Brian Jonestown Massacre, in which lead vocalist Bobby Heckler had a brief stint. The inevitable Spacemen's heavily distortion-laden guitar contributions on the album's "Cosmic Lektor" introduces waves of pure sonic electricity that slowly weave their way through hypnotically repetitive guitar riffs. The disc comes dazzling in with the crest of heavy dressing baselines in preparation for the storm, but the blanket of chaotic gloom and doom eventually begins to disperse, making way for the rejuvenation of a calm sea. The pure psychedelic wave is abated by the inclusion of "The Dope Gets Good", which leaves the mood with wholesome pop melodies and a feeling of adolescent carelessness. But it's on track like the ethereal, 11 minute "Oh Shudder" where the group's acid-washed sound really takes off. (Mark Chapman)

YEAH YEAH YEAHS

FEVER TO TELL

DRESDEN UNPLUGGED Chapter One LP

In the wake of The Strokes and White Stripes come New York's Yeah Yeah Yeahs, who similarly present their own take on 70s new wave and garage rock. Led by Chasey Hyde soundstage Karen O, with impressive guitar gymnastics by Nicolas Zinner and forceful drumming from Benin Chase, Yeah Yeah Yeahs' debut album kicks out low and lived with a set of intelligently performed rock tunes distinguished by Karen O's smart and snarling lyrics. Sanfrancisco madcap hits like "Rich", "Date With The Night" and "Mon" are pulled to the front, but dig a little deeper and yeah Yeah Yeah Yeahs' darker side glows. Particularly on the electro-music barf trip of "No No" that diverts the rest of the album into a more exulting and inventive direction. On "Mop", "Y Control" and the alternating "Modern Renaissance" the trio's true potential shows through the already peeling, plaintive guitars of their earlier songs. □

Critical Beats

Reviewed by Philip Sherburne

ALEX CORTEX

INWARD CTRL

ANNA MEET ANNI CD/DVD

Despite having recorded for Klang, Kastenzeit, and Seelen, Germany's Alex Cortex remains relatively unknown. But this first album for the new Amsterdam label Aava 24 tracks. Cortex lays down power-funk composed of dusty Detroit Techno and the pulverized remains of early IDM. Guiltlessly saccharine string pads, agile synths, bright harpsichord tones and languid, post-Aztec basslines are his stock in trade. Recalling the sketchbook approach of certain Black Dog productions, many of his tracks clock in at under three minutes. Instead, a quarter of them are less than two minutes. But they're far from slapdash or mere imitations. Thought pieces emerge from them, perhaps in the course of a handful of bars, and, once they achieve perfection, they're content to slide into a velvet silence, yielding the floor to the next, unlikely gem.

JIRKU/JUDGE

PLURISM

ONTOUR LTD CD

A lovely CD of skipping percussion and uncommon restraint, Plurism is all about the rustle of recognition and the hash of words held back. Ticks and vapour trails and wagging stalks of gear, like bodies meeting bodies *conkr* through the ree. Toronto's Robin Judge and Tomas Jirku, known from releases on No Type and Force Inc., could purify chords into soft, rounded shapes that initially sound delicate, but turn out to be strangely durable. They press real-world elements — off-color twangs from the dead part of the guitar's neck, brittle piano twinklings — into the geyser-like luna, resulting in an extraordinarily tactile sound. Occasionally a sense of exhaustion sets in, not the exhaustion of form, but simple, physical fatigue, manifested in sluggish beats and chords that move toward the leaderless feet of high altitude. It's an interesting approach for MicroHouse, which is so often about the unremembered glide. Judge and Jirku take inspiration from the nocturnal slowness that wraps itself around the quietude of pulses.

GUSTAVO LAMAS

RADIANTES EP

PERSONA PR0510 12"

The livin' ain't easy in Argentina these days, but you wouldn't know it from listening to the latest release from Buenos Aires' Gustavo Lamas. Previous records for Fugit, Traum and Oral have been mixed affairs of shifting chords and pulses so faint they're barely audible, but these four tracks punctuate their internal shuffle with punchy impulsive rhythms and crackling accents. Radiantes is not only Lamas's most assured work but also his most optimistic, "Mejoré" especially evens by as dreamy, housing blue as smooth it makes Luoma look heavy-handed. It begins simply enough, with a slow rotation of chords and fizzy shaker rhythms, but halfway through a quietly ecstatic refrain burns up from the midst of the muddle, like new desire

displacing every other emotion like so much lukewarm bathwater.

G LISTER

G LISTER RIDES AGAIN

SPIRMANIA VS MOSQUITO/MOSQUITO/PRES 12"

Last time I checked in with Sprimania, it was a dirt 'n' bass label. Clearly I haven't been playing close enough attention, because on the joint effort with Cristian Vogel's Mosquito imprint, G Lister (who may or may not be Jamie Edelli) offers up four tracks of highly eccentric beat factory that refuses to be settled comfortably with breakbeat or Techno. The opening "Glast N Go" effects clunk, rock n' roll percussion with a chorus of howling tea kettles and clanking chains. Prowling restlessly at a 4/4 clip, but with all the dancefloor features breached into nothingness, this is haunted music at its spookiest. "Go Get 'Em," boosted by gongs and habs withubby, wavy percussive, is eccentric electro in the vein of Two Lane Swordsman or Gascon. In keeping with the proto-inspired title, "Martime Under Mo Glaz" is a seafaring, one-eyed and thus depthless panorama of lurching breaks and logisms. "All That Glitters" rounds out the record with a hard hitting slab of big-Hip recalling Reg's bluntest work. Crusty with white noise, it all scorching, pings and chirps scatter like errant balls on a roulette wheel.

LUCIANO

ALPINE ROCKET

PERLON PERL012 12"

The Swiss-Chilean producer returns to Perlon — he contributed to the label's Supergeotry compilation — after a spate of recent singles for Mental Groove, Bruckdrucke and Klang Elektronik. In a genre where individual style is generally reduced to the most insincere of tweeds to fit the template, Luciano's work is remarkably distinctive, borrowing from electro's cluttered stunner and Autec's drooling, numbed-up shimmer. Most notably, though, Luciano overlays MicroHouse's typical 4/4 pattern with a longer, two bar shift that shifts the emphasis from the club-influenced two and four to the third beat of every other measure — in effect, doubling his oppose and flogging, in the manner of Jungle, mutinous double-time and half-time versions. More importantly, perhaps, is the relentless maladroitness of his compositions, which festers out the comparatively geyser-like world of classic Detroit Techno but flip-side up, which makes for a change, Danza, imposing chords flicker and prevaricate before erupting in the form of so much base and such sharp, needling twitters. It should be noted that rarely, if ever, has an electronic label's very first release sounded this fat, this deep, this ill. Whoever mastered this cut deserves a medal.

It might as well be this from Jim DeBarge but Record Camp's inaugural compilation, Brooklyn Keeps On Takin' It (complete with a very "we wear our aesthetic on our sleeve" sleeve courtesy former TOR member Design By Build), suggests that there's more where *Sky Tucker* comes from. Heen Senses' *Death!*, Balcons and Secret Agent Gel weigz in with uncomfortable, sour dirges that suggests itself as the third point in the triangle between Stem and Scheneme.

MIKE SHANNON

KNOW RETURNS

GYROSCOPE CY0101 12"

AKUFEN

HORROMARA EP

REVIEWER REVO010 12"

Fractionless and seemingly without reference to any universe outside its own closed system of

abiding beats and magnetic pulses, Mike Shannon's Techno looks its secrets made a feer by four box. "Wicked Purifiers", the Canadian producer's collaboration with countrymen Tim Stokke-Reiss, works in just this way, intercepting softie transmissions from an orb called Detroit and beaming back nothing but this cool, mathematical formulation. A translucent kick-drum gurglingly keeps time while shuffling hi-hats threaten quiet revolt. Midway through, the track changes its tune entirely, as though the encryption key were already reset. "Ticket To Hells" and "Let's All Humanise" offer slightly more idiosyncratic, swing-piano minimal Techno. These two tracks are both obviously influenced by Montréal's Akufen, whose 1999 *Horromara* EP affords a glimpse of the two-stepping technicalities before he got sucked into the radio dist of *My Way*. Around a steady 4/4 pulse, Akufen's off-beats lurch drunkenly while pings and chirps scatter like errant balls on a roulette wheel.

SKY TUCKER

PRESSING MATTERS EP

RECORD CAMP RCAMP001 12"

VARIOUS

BROOKLYN KEEPS ON TAKIN' IT

RECORD CAMP HC005 12"

For several years now, Brooklyn's Record Camp crew have been responsible for one of New York's more consistent showcases for IDM and eccentric dance music. The first release on their long-promised label comes from Miami-based Sky Tucker and, appropriate to his Florida origins, his four-track Pressing Matters EP sashays with smart electro ostendin. It's really shy about melody, but not in that twond gen Finitistish way, but flip-side up, which makes for a change, Danza, imposing chords flicker and prevaricate before erupting in the form of so much base and such sharp, needling twitters. It should be noted that rarely, if ever, has an electronic label's very first release sounded this fat, this deep, this ill. Whoever mastered this cut deserves a medal.

It might as well be this from Jim DeBarge but Record Camp's inaugural compilation, Brooklyn Keeps On Takin' It (complete with a very "we wear our aesthetic on our sleeve" sleeve courtesy former TOR member Design By Build), suggests that there's more where *Sky Tucker* comes from. Heen Senses' *Death!*, Balcons and Secret Agent Gel weigz in with uncomfortable, sour dirges that suggests itself as the third point in the triangle between Stem and Scheneme.

SUTEKH

HANDS ON FEET EP

MICROSOLUTIORS TO MEGA PROBLEMISI

SOUL JAZZ SJ079312 12"

For the second release on Soul Jazz's Electronic imprint, Microsolutions To Mega Problemis, the label taps another San Franciscan, Seth Henriz, to follow in KJ Clayton's shoes. Soul Jazz might be onto something. It certainly sounds like SF's soulfully-savvy experimental Techno massive is picking up steam after a year out of the

limelight. Hands On Feet is Sutekh's most deliciously stupid work yet. It employs the same spasticus aesthetic as Sourchick, Safety Scissors and, to a lesser extent, Akufen, harboring lots of grinds and toothpicked detritus into a dense patty of ground sound. Vocalizations, honk squawks, thudding kick drums and Metal power chords all slot themselves, Pashino style, into a buzzing, quaking machine. The oom-pah-pah of "Metal Party" is so pronounced it could make the Kampala folks ital-out Germanized, but "Boiler Tops", which relies upon the same technique, is more streamlined, corralling elephantine basses and serpentine synth lines into an elegant pas de deux.

TWEEK

MOTALA

CONTEXT FREE MEDIA TEXT111 12"

All proceeds from Twink's second single for Sutekh's Context Free Media label go to benefit the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Thankfully, however, the single is at least as sonically engaging as it is politically engaged. The four tracks here come from the San Francisco producer's trademark squish and crinkle Microhouse, to grinding, crackling ambient, is an almost straightforward R&B sensibility, a best shipped in layer upon layer of combustible bubble wrap. "No Teat No Potatoes" offers an example of the latter, riding on the kind of lazy House rhythm that's earned the name Detroit, boudoir, tucked up with dainty chords and simply fractured into a chattering mess of pools and feet. "Motala" and the immensely titled "Pens Stepping Against The Leg Of A Naked Man Running" run closer to Twink's previous releases for Force Inc., sequencing glancing chords and blasts of static pointillism renderings as fluid as they are interuptive.

WHY SHEEP?

EARTH BORN

THIRD EAR 3E001 12"

What is it with the Japanese fixation on sheep? First there was Haruki Murakami's novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, now Gaku Uchida's Why Sheep? poses the wacky question across two strange tracks of eccentric compiloids. "Earthborn" sounds like an art brut attempt at Big Beat, playing garish funk guitars off cuffed hands, stabs, glocken, saxesophones and metal charts and grunts. Totally lacking in self-restraint, the tune finds its opposite in *7575*, which layers plucked and bowed strings, panos and harshed percussoin into a s/o-noo-wrestling match between Haydn Bööd and Steve Reich. The B-side's two remakes are for more straightforward Redoose manages to reconfigure Uchida's source material into a very French-like cut, complete with lighly off-beat drum pattern, low-bending bass and greasy organzwerk organs. Clubbed to Death's version of "Earthborn", meanwhile, fattens it all down into a slow, dark electro-folica groove that harkens back to Third Ear's most notable release so far, Detroit Beddown Volume 1. □

Dub

Reviewed by Steve Barker

CLIVE FIELD MARSHALL POOR HOUSE ROCKERS WICKED 304 LP

Released in 1981, this album quickly sold out, and has since become a collectors' item, proving that vinyl alone is no guarantee of quality. Although it is true that many Wicked productions have been unjustly overlooked, this is not one of them. Covering a bewildering range of subjects including Jamaican tourist, Carter and Reagon, banks and building, it's all delivered in the mannered dancehall style inflicted by Lene Ranger and not effectively resisted elsewhere by lesser DJs. The after states to groan about three tracks in. A shrewd, as the fourth track 'Sheep Gone Clear' is the album's highlight for the way it deals with the lip things of the time – the bever-hat and euphemism cost.

MAMPATION FEATURING RAS DONOVAN VERSION TRAIN STARGROOVE CD/CD

Mampation is the creation of Ta Rococo Roots bassist Stefan Schneider. Ras Donovan and DJ Scilla have both performed live with Rhythm And Sound's Tishman, and it's to the Berlin singer that we must go for reference. This is the latest example of an entirely new strain of reggae/dubbed electronica that is emerging out of the Berlin/Vienna axis. Radian's Martin Brandmeyer also had a hand in proceedings. The vocals now follow the drift of the music but in a much more languorous, abstract and flowing style than, say, that of their UK Garage counterparts who imitate ragga's scatterfest style. It might not be built for dancefloor movement, but it's still sessions stuff.

JACKIE MITTOO CHAMPION IN THE ARENA: 1976-1977 BLOOD AND FIRE BAF042 CD

As Clement Dodd's musical director at Brentford Road, Kingston is the 1960s and '70s. Jackie Mittoo's musical canonisation is already assured. This set, produced by Busby Lee and originally released as Showcase, dates from the time the keyboardist relocated to Toronto and made visits back to Jamaica for his sessions. These new interpretations of his earlier studio cuts surprise like 'Hot Milk', 'Darkie Shade Of Black' (itself a version of the Barlies' 'Norwegian Wood') and 'Drum Song' are galvanised by the drums of the ultra-hot Sly Dunbar with the aid of Scylla on percussions. While the '60s versions could have fitted into a cabaret context, these new ones were strictly dancehall. And funny too just check out 'The Snipe'. Some of these original album tracks are given extended treatment and a further seven contemporary bonus cuts are added, most notably 'Clean Up The Areas', an organ version to Johnny Clarke's 'Peace And Love In The Ghetto'.

NINEY THE OBSERVER PRESENTS KING TUBBY IN DUB: BRING THE DUB COME HEARTBEAT HBT077 CD

Eager not to miss out on the current wave of releases, Niney is appearing in all formats and

from all directions. This one comes from his long-standing relationship with the Heartbeat label that has produced some nice compilations but nothing really inspired, save a Dennis Brown dub album. The opening 12 tracks are tubby at his most majestic, particularly 'Dromley Stark', where Tubbs becomes a jazzastrator in his control of the ensemble. So much so, that it's difficult to believe that the final version cut was not 'arranged' at the first recording session when the rhythm was laid. 'King Tubby's Dub' is even more remarkable, as Tubbs mutes all the clangers down chime and bass for the middle section of the track's three minutes, generating a stunning set of dynamics subtly beyond musical geometry. There's an additional bonus in the shape of a bunch of dubs from the Dubbing With The Observer album, even if they have appeared several times over the past few years.

LEE PERRY/THE WAILERS & WONG CHU DISCO DEVIL/KEEP ON MOVING UPSETTER/TROJAN TSDW009 12"

I once touched a copy of the original 12" of this tune – a singjay version of Max Romeo's 'Dance The Devil' – 'Disco Devil' reproduces the original dubish artwork of the 1977 sleeve. But it's the flip that does the damage. The drugging rhythm pushing forward The Wailers' vocal version of the Curtis Mayfield classic belies the mayhem to come. 'What Is Twisted' cannot be straightforward; what is not yet cannot be counted, 'Confusion on the band' goes. Tippettone DJ Wong Chua famously apostrophised MM into, as he reads it into the sonic chasm of Perry's soulistic electro-deck excursion. Echo and delay are set at maximum speaker-damaging levels, while the massively pumped trombone monotonically stabs through the dub. Do not miss this one.

SUPERSOUL 40 ACRES AND A MOOG METRONOME M00097 CD

Jamaican born and Miami based Don Cornelion, aka Superou, has been running backwards and forwards across multiple dance saloons over the past ten years, appearing on countless Reggae and Hip Hop compilations. This, his first solo album release, collects songs from his previous 12" settings on his Metronome label plus five new ones. The set motifs from the opening two deep reggae versions through a mix of twisted funk, appetizing melody lines, abstract bass runs and, finally, rap and dancehall funk, feature Marshawn, Skem and DJ Infamous. Superou steals clear of the ordered chaos that occasionally reigns at the Wilder Soundcloud label with a lightness of touch that must be a Miami thing.

VARIOUS BABYLON IS OURS: THE USA IN DUB SELECT GUTS SGE002 CD

This collection of American dub was perversely birthed by Germany's Echo Beach/Selct Cutz outfit, but conceived on the West Coast by Ron Nachman from XLR8R and DJ Sep from San

Franisco's Dub Mission. Pulling in offerings from both coasts and not much in between, the disc introduces new names to this column, while producing no dub and avoiding the easy stereo aches, such as Ben Wu, whose pedigree includes time spent in the orbit of Loswell and Timo Corp (including Jack Dangers) coming from a Hip hop direction. It's a worthy compilation, but it could easily have come from the UK and Europe ten years ago.

VARIOUS DANCEHALL 69: 40 SKINHEAD REGGAE RARITIES TROJAN TSD0006 3XCD

"Stop that noise out, I want to get off," you may be singing to yourself as you read of Tejan's one millionth record comp. Well, if you haven't turned out to overdose, this is slightly better than your run of the mill ska collection due to its focus on the rawer end of the spectrum. The second disc, in particular, is a good antidote to the warts of 'Gems Of Navarino' and 'Return Of Django' (comp with The Prophets' ghestly and bloody 'Revenge Of Eastwood', the joyful noise of Desmond Riley's 'Teen Threat', Sir Collie's sun-glasses 'Black Panther' and King Horro's proto-Linton Kwesi Johnson's 'The Curving Blade'. (Peter Shapiro)

VARIOUS DANCEHALL TECHNIQUES MAXIMUM PRESSURE MPH CD/DVD

As author of this sleeve notes, I must declare an upfront interest in this anthology of largely vintage Winston 'Mkey' promotional productions. At the same time, I must also confess that repeated listening to Reggae Stepper's amazing reading of the 'Stalag' rhythm, here known as 'Qu-on-uh', in so way demonstrated my admiration for this and many of the other great cuts collected here. Admiral Teets' 'Leave People Business', Cathy Ranks' 'Guamanian Girl' and Johnny P's 'Hal Jockey' all remain owing achievements of the DJ's art from those days. Spanning the pre- and post-digital era, Winston Riley continued his prestigious career with the support and development of many of the greatest names to emerge in reggae through the 1980s, including Sheek & Cleve who provided the rhythm for scores of the decade's greatest hits. This album sits alongside releases from sister label Pressure Sounds, Roots Techniques and Dub Techniques, in documenting Riley's remarkable career.

VARIOUS DON LETTS PRESENTS THE MIGHTY TROJAN SOUND TROJAN TSD0066 3XCD

It's difficult to see the motivation behind this album, except to say that if one in ten Clash fans buy it, then it will sell a slotted for a reggae collector. However, beyond this being a shrewd 'Don Letts's personal memory bank', it's also a superseed reggae compilation spread over two CDs. The first consists of unarguable classics with a second more interesting volume featuring tracks that have contributed to the growth of bass and dub culture. Unsurprisingly the second

selection could have proudly stood alone with a much better mix of classics like 'Liquidator', 'Elizabeth Raggae', 'Return Of Django', et al, and picks from a deeper vein, like 'Doctor No Go', 'Soul Soilder', 'Channel One Is A Joke' and 'I'm The Barber'.

VARIOUS HIGH EXPLOSION: DJ SOUNDS FROM 1970 TO 1976 TRIGA TLP005 3XCD/3XLP

Sure, the majority of these tracks have been released a thousand times in every conceivable format, and yes, time and over-familiarity have blunted much of their power, and 50 tools of toilover and DJ chat from the same era is overkill, but this is still a worthwhile précis of the art of toasting. Running from U Roy, the opener being his truly epochal 'Rule The Nation', to Jah Wood, it's difficult to spot any glaring omissions from the yet to be constructed DJ Hall of Fame. Highlights include an early version of 'Deck Of Cards' by the very great Prince Far I, King Iwah's somewhat obscure but wonderful 'Give Me Power (Version 2)', a fittingly earthy 'Sound System' on Sir Lord Comi's 'Dj Hall Of Fame', Jah Berry's giddily litthy 'Daughter Whole Lotta Sugar Down Dell' and Dave Baker's truly bizarre version of Jerry Butler's 'Only The Strong Survive'.

VARIOUS RODIGAN'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY EMI EMV110 3XCD

Dave Rodigan first started broadcasting on Radio London in 1979 and has remained a strong presence on the UK's reggae scene ever since. As you can no doubt gather, this compilation includes tracks from across his entire career and beyond. The earliest track – Desmond Dekker's '007 (Shanty Town)' from 1967 and Horace Andy's 'You Are My Angel' from 1973 – indicate the scope of, and problems with, the album. The set focuses almost exclusively on the commercial, mainstream-friendly end of the reggae market, with obvious tunes (Max Priest, Gregory Isaacs, Shaggy, Shabba Ranks, etc) and smarmy Motown covers galore. At least it's got Raynor & Reid's felicitous 'Bushment Party' (Peter Steepey).

SYLFORD WALKER/ KING TUBBY DEUTERONOMY SOUTH EAST MUSIC SE00000010

Glenmore 'The Godson' Brown has once again refined the South East Music imprint, this time for a series of sets that classes repressed in the de aquar 10" format. Top spot goes to the extended version of Sylfod Walker's 'Deuteronomy', which appeared recently on the Glittern Roots label before quickly disappearing. Its six minutes of hardcore righteousness is probably the most relentless biffa mix cut to vinyl. The same series also includes another Walker tune, 'Chant Down Babylon', followed by its dub, 'Request Granted In Dubwise', and three additional cuts all venving Lloyd Park's nozzle 'Steving' rhythm □

Electronica

Reviewed by Ken Hollings

IA BERICOHEA

ROIJO

M-NUS MINUS15 CD/LP

"Rojo," the Spanish word for "red," is a word not very chosen by fitting remiss to the memory of tanglo king Osvaldo Pugliese, whose memory was kept alive through his blissful absence by his orchestra leaving a new canticion on his silent piano during performances, or to the colour of blood, the seven short tracks sequenced together here dip with a slow bleedingthine menisco. Bericochea brings just enough emotional edge and sonic vibrancy to his dry minimalist beats and deep quavering bass patterns to give them a stealthy, unsettling life of their own. His compositions seem to come out of nowhere, accumulating an undeniably presence that lingers on long after the final shudder.

CAPTAIN COMATOSE

GOING OUT

PLAYHOUSE CD

There are some rules in life that are ignored at your peril. Never allow yourself to be photographed while eating, never shop anywhere that has the word "Simplicity" over its door, and never try to sing like Iggy Pop when covering one of his songs. It is a solo gold certainty you will end up sounding like Phil Oakey out of The Human League. Undaunted, Khan and DJ Snax, the duo responsible for Captain Comatose's mix of lunging electro, vocoder choruses and disco stamping, take a stab at belting out a karaoke version of "Baby" from Iggy's *Last For Life* album, and guess what? They sound just like Phil Oakey out of The Human League. Saw that one coming, didn't you?

CHRIS CLARK

CERAMICS IS THE BOMB

WARP/WARPCD

Thrusting to fling themselves apart from nanoscale to nanospace, Chris Clark's complex digital structures are the listening equivalent of those time-lapse photographic sequences showing a spider spinning its web, watched under the influence of powerful hallucinogens. Beats switch and stutter, recorded samples of voices are fragmented and loop into meaningless babble. Dynamics are pushed to extremes. Then an occasional burst of Acid 303 squelch emerges to remind you of simpler, more reassuring times. As a preview to his forthcoming album, *Empty The Boxes* (Y'know, the six titles that make up *Ceramics Is The Bomb* seem more integrated and worked through than those on Clark's *Clawson Park* debut, allowing their messy heterogeneity to shine through. Sloggy but safe.

CODEBASE

STYLE ENCODING

FORCE INC/HM1054 CD

Scientific veteran Kim Butcher creates his science out of equal parts purity and pleasure. With releases on 240 Vots and Orbital Records already behind him, his Codebase offers an especially sharp revision of just what electronic rhythms can do. As its title suggests, Style

Encoding is a historical projection, an elegant summation and an acutely focused projection onto the dimension of the immediate future. Check out the fresh-faced electro hustle of "Cascade View" and "Shift" riding up against the range, self-assured House of "Shrimps-2", then fast forward to the expansive retrospective bling of the closing "Iron". Guaranteed to take you wherever you want to go.

DOPPLERFFECT

LINEAR ACCELERATOR

INTERNATIONAL DEEJAY GIGGIO/GIGGIO CO

Three years on from *Gigglehouse*, their previous long player for Giggle, Detroit's Dopplereffect are back with another extended parabolic flight along electronica's shadowy outer edge. Themed around the swelling absences, subliminal velocities and economic spires of particle physics, the six compositions on *Linear Accelerator* take up the space and time allocated to them with an easy authority. "Photon Impulse" and "Ridicule Resonances" are vast, swelling expanses of sound. "Gigantor" hones tightly while "Myon-Neutrino" and "Z-Boson" revel in the kind of urgent periodicity normally associated with the hi-tech soundtracks John Carpenter uses to record with Alan Howarth for films like *Escape From New York* and *Hellraiser IV: An uncomprising plunge into a darker dimension.*

ELECTRONICAT

21ST CENTURY TOY

DURK B/D0115 CD/LP

Parusia Techno rocker Fred Begit knows the score: stick a drum machine and a fuzzy guitar together and you'll get half the pop culture of the past 40 years right in front of you. No one yet knows what constitutes the other half, but it very probably involves doing a French language cover of "Blinded Love" that completely ignores the soul organs and goes straight for the Soft Cell version instead. All the same, "Amour Sale" works well alongside the dreary slum of "Whenever You Want It" and the miscreant, pumped-up apercu to be found on the title cut. There's also a cute Yarbards parody running through "Bright", and some low-rent allusions to early Adam And The Ants kicking around "Head Bay". Habitay you can dance to.

FRONT 242

PULSE

INTERFERO/HF043399 CD

Bergen body shamers Front 242 have run their first few tracks into one long instrumental which glories under the title "Sep'66". Unfortunately the Aufschuss has had a pretty timing of it: in a referenced community in Florida where he's investigating local voting irregularities and definitely not taking sides. Nevertheless Front 242 and crew along in blissful ignorance, binging out big electro beats as if there were no tomorrow. "There is nothing here / haven't seen," runs the opening to one song that could have been recorded any time ever last two decades. "I'm just waiting for my time to leave." You've got nobody to blame but yourself, I'll say.

KEN ISHII

FUTURE IN LIGHT

EXCEPTIONAL EXPLOCO0002 CD

As glisteningly transparent as the rather dated wire-frame graphics of its cover art, the latest release from the man who brought you the dancing theme to the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics and the soundtrack for the PS2 game, *Res 2*, sounds like it's actually emanating from the room next door. Exquisitely engineered and polished to the inside edge of invisibility. Future In Light marks a point where ambience becomes coaxed with remorseless. Ears The Techno roughhousing of "Stone Linenhard" and "Presta" comes across as just a tad too distant and polite to be gripping. It looks towards music as an amorphous presence, drifting from one world to the next, endlessly trying to sell you stuff.

ANGIE REED

ANGIE REED PRESENTS THE

BEST OF BARBARA

BROCKHAUS

CHOKO/SONG COSR011 CD

I like the title theme to *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* as esay ex-Stereo Total chanteuse Angie Reed throws her hat in the air and decides she just might make it after all. With a little help from Sonny On Speed house stylies, of course. Looks like all those years singing punk pop covers of Serge Gainsbourg have finally paid off. Coming on like some divine motor-mouth heftiness, Reed gobs her wicked way past disco gimp, psychic dodo and cocaine whores, gives the finger to innumerable bosses everywhere, utters some fly-girl pants and ends with Iggy Warhol going down on her illustrious (don't ask).

SCSI-9

DIGITAL RUSSIAN

FORGE TRACKS FTB5 CD

With a string of 12" releases to their name, Moscow producers Anton Kuklin and Maxim Milyutin certainly know how to go for the referential beat and the edacious effect. Balancing its shifts and phases, "Horizon 16" wastes no time calling yes in "Deep & Fox" stretches Hause's latitude of movement and veers way into the 21st century, while "Space Day" reaches back to the shimmering party of early 90s Frankfurt France, just so we don't forget where this is all coming from. Clean and serene, SCSI-9 give an object lesson in how to isolate Techne's abstract allure without either drowning the life out of it or repeatedly overstating the obvious.

ULTRA-RED

AMINISTIA!

ANTROGIC AVANTAGE CD

Adept at the digital movement of massed bodies through space, LA activists Ultra-red transform the voices and sounds of a workers' rights rally in New York into a sequence of four rhythmic sound collages. Taking place on May Day 2000, the public demonstration was in support of amnesty for economic migrants to the US. The official 9/11 death toll lists only one endocrinologist worker as having died in the twin towers disaster. However, at least a further 66 have been reported missing as a result of the WTC collapse. Any battle for free speech is also a battle for public space. By the radical deployment of sound, Ultra-red have given a voice to those who are forced to remain invisible.

Towers disaster. However, at least a further 66 have been reported missing as a result of the WTC collapse. Any battle for free speech is also a battle for public space. By the radical deployment of sound, Ultra-red have given a voice to those who are forced to remain invisible.

VISIONS OF EXCESS

SENSITIVE DISRUPTION

TONE CASUALTIES TCG44 CD

This is a US licensed version of an album that was originally released in 2001 on Italy's Minus Habens label. Here, Paul Bryant, ex-Clock DVA, System 01 and Coda, joined forces with Fonod Media Production's Niels Karsten Fischer to create some deeply disturbing, mood-altering ambience. Subsonic rumbles, clangs and extractions gather together like a threatening storm, especially on the magnificent "Belief Systems" and "Intransigence", giving way only to the laudious purring of noted philosophical trickster Robert Anton Wilson. Worth tracking down, as last year's *Minus Habens* compilation *Fractured Reality*, featuring Waters of Ecstasy, Matmatah, Laurent Garnier and Seamus Yokota.

GEOFF WHITE &

STEWART WALKER

DISCORD

FORCE INC/FIM005 CD

Swapping tracks and files in one smoothly engineered flow, White and Walker take it in turns to bring the third mind book into creative existence. Ripping from the spring electric folk of "Merleus Pt 1" to Geoff White's clipped staccato, then back again for "Merleus Pt 2", Discord is anything but discordent in its methods or results. On "Panda" and "Cloud City", White constructs padscapes for Walker to develop into some fine pieces of digital disco. Mixed in towards the set's end is "Camulus Bloom", which keeps things clasp and clean right up to the flickering counterpart of the final track "Smile". Represented only by blank silhouettes on the accompanying artwork, these are two minds with little to be so modest about.

ZEIGENBOCK KOPE

NOCTURNAL SUBMISSIONS

THIRDBEAR/MCOWARDY CD

OK, here's one to separate the men from the boys. Without a hint of apathy, German brothers Hans and Uli Buschbacher (not their real names) drag dance music riding and streaming into the bacchanal and then get it open wide for daddy. And there's no arguing this time either. Dirty beats, dirter bass and utterly filthy production values come together in celebration of meaningful sex, reckless drug consumption and the importance of brooding sullenness and eccentric hair as fashion accessories. The heavy industrial thud on "Leather Gloves", "Boam Cor Boys 2" and "Hunter Sleep" is guaranteed to get you on your feet before loosing you to your knees. So stop peeing and no pooping, this is definitely the mad fun you can have with your eyes shut tight. □

Global

Reviewed by Richard Henderson

KING SUNNY ADÉ

SYNCHRO SERIES

INCORPORATED 0004 CD

BEST OF THE CLASSIC YEARS

BUENOS HERMANOS CD

When Nigeria's modernist monarch King Sunny Adé (born Ayub Ogundehin) crossed America on the heels of his unpruned Island Records debut, 1982's *Jaya Jaya*, he sauted records along the tour stops with vinyl copies of half a dozen earlier albums made with his group African Beats. Those lucky enough to acquire copies were I'm evidently aware of the refinements made by Adé and then-producer Martin Messinger to the group's sound on their new release. Instruments such as accordions, long part of Jaya's furnishings, were dropped. Synths and pedal steel were introduced, with dub mixing techniques into bargain. The albums that Adé imported sported retooled mixes, but were no less sophisticated in the dense waves of guitar, bass, percussions and talking drums than mimicked the cadence of Yoruba speech. The African Beats turned in much looser performances, where both rhythm and tuning were somewhat more impressionistic.

Musically and sweet, Adé's group could bring to mind an Africanized *Genderel Dead*.

Island gave up on Adé in 1985, opting not to release his soundtrack - a starting amalgam of talking drums and Hothkoph-like synthetic timbres - for director Robert Altman's *O C & Stiggo*. The vocalist/guitarist returned to Nigeria, refined his group and continued to release albums on his own Atak Park label, among others. Fortunately, nearly 20 years later, patient remittents of what first drew Western ears to jùju music are finally available in the form of two CDs, each a chronicle of the sound that made Adé and company a top draw in the right clubs of Lagos during the 1970s and early '80s. The Africanic compilation is closer to a proper *fasanle* edition, as it houses, among other measures, complete A and B sides of Adé's *Gbo Gbo* (Ore 1982), all rolling guitar lines and bubbling percussions. The disc's second half showcases the radical innovations unveiled with 1986's *Synchro Series* and includes the "Waka" version mix of "A Fun Mi," long available only on an Island '12" single. The *Standalone* collection, while drawing from a dozen albums made in the 1970s, is an equally valuable document. The suites of songs that would fill whole sides of Adé's later LPs are heard here in nascent form, including a complete 17-minute version of "Synchro System," remastered later in a truncated version as the title track of his second international release. No one attending an African Beats show of the period had any difficulty accepting the notion that the music could support an all-night party; it retains that potency in the present day.

DEBASHISH BHATTACHARYA & BOB BROZMAN

MAHIMA

RIVERBED/WORLD MUSIC NETWORK TUGCD1299 CD

Bob Brozman possesses the beat passport that any peripatetic scholar of global music could

hope to earn in the lightning left hand that animates his National steel guitar. Previous collaborators have taken him to Okinawa and La Réunion; Mahima finds him dueling with Indian innovator Debashish Bhattacharya, student of guru Bhupan Ibrahim, who brought slide guitar into the Hindustani classical canon. The plectrum pairing obstinately recalls Ry Cooder and Milt Shiff's *A Meeting By The River*, a fine Impressionism that sounds sorely in need of coffee when played next to Marimba. Through Indian ragas define the composition template here, the innovation intrinsic to that form very rarely disappears.

Throughout these 11 tracks, so effervescent is the dialogue between Bhattacharya and Brozman, the former's family is much in evidence, too, with brother Subhashis on tabla and sister Suparna's vocals taking wing along the string interplay, a more celestial tone on Indian film vocal. Bhattacharya has repurposed the slide guitar for raga performance, bringing the total number of strings to two dozen; and engineer Daniel Thomas's sparkling studio sound gives voice to each new string. Though the wit one associates with Brozman's picking (of his duets with Ledward Kaparina and René Lacaille) is slightly muted in the Subcontinental context, the energy and inventiveness are undiminished. Two masters of the bent note, happy as a box of birds.

LUDERIN DARBOINE'S HACKBERRY RAMBLERS

EARLY RECORDINGS 1935-1950

ARTICLEONE TECO CD

Its lead-off track, "Jolie Blonde," has a muted sound and tepid pace, but the party starts with the Southern Louisiana string quartet in complete control on the following "Just Once More." Label head Chris Stachowitsch's notes point up the sophistication of the group's repertoire and their struggles to integrate amplification during the 1930s - they powered their PA with a jury-rigged connection to Ludérin Darboine's sliding Ford in the parking lot. The Ramblers bleed through Cajun French dancehall anthems, slipping on to jazz and blues or these 60-year old recordings. Few groups of this period could claim their quibbles modality. *Wauwaw*, two-step swamp waltzes and African-American social dances are all gaited for the two guitars, violin and singing bass that the Ramblers adapt to any style. □

IBRAHIM FERRER

BUENOS HERMANOS

WORLD CIRCUMNUSCUS 7998600 CD

The most dramatic example of a talent rescued from obscurity by the success of the Buena Vista Social Club, vocalist Ibrahim Ferrer returns to the air confines of Havana's Egrem Studios. His producer, purist Ry Cooder, has assembled an impressive cast of helpers, including Los Zelotes' guitarist Manolo Galván (often providing hypnotic son montuno piano to here). The Blind Boys Of Alabama and the New Orleans jazz ace Prince Johnson, who shuffles Ferrer's voice on "Naufragio" to heartbreaking effect. The set steams along as you might expect of still another

entry in this winning franchise, but the overdriving tone is muted slightly by comparison to Ferrer's previous solo disc, possibly a function of the singer's advancing age. Still, he exudes the same-souled "Guaguancó Callejero" as though the "dove black woman" of the lyrics was in the vocal booth with him. As with last year's solo disc by Buena Vista bassist Orlando 'Cachao' López, Buenos Hermanos takes formal liberties with vintage Cuban music, and the results are nearly always an improvement. Impressed verse, from "Dye the Concep," wherein Ferrer caresses a half-breed woman trying to fit in: "Don't perm your hair again/You'll end up bald."

THE MONKS OF SHERAB LING MONASTERY

SACRED TIBETAN CHANT

ADAGIO WORLD 195445 CD

Despite the gravitas that is part and parcel of any recording of Tibetan liturgical music, the performances topped at northern India's Sherab Ling Monastery have the comforting racket of daily activity. Overall a less formal, fewer pearly, different from the audiophile transparency of Tibetan overtone singing made for Michael Hart's label a decade ago. The sounds of daily prayer and meditation are here instantly, providing contrast with the clash of literally heavy metal percussion introducing the invocation and offering of Mahakala. Page heard in the disc's second half, which lengthy song allows for a range comparable to the baritone guitar beloved of surf groups. The magnum or magnum, that quantum kernel of Persian music theory as an organizing mode generates music of a more severe character than its Indian counterpart, the raga. Its harmonic palette is no less sophisticated. All of the instruments heard here are homophonic, the better to achieve the actively ornamented melodies and muscular phrasing required by an ou or the dizzying internal leaps of the khenmedes (spike fiddles) during a seven minute solo by the amorous Beshe Nigra.

NAJITE

OKLUOK PROPHECY: AFRICA BEFORE THE INVASION

SOHN DISK EP09255 CD

Even if one was unaware of the tolling drums and congas played by Najite Agudontos on recordings made by Félix Ankoula-Kut, his former employer's signature Akoutab is well lent, from shading start to stinging end of this Nigerian expatriate's solo disc. As with recent outings by another alumnus of Félix's rhythm section, Tony Allen (who chooses this more closely to the Chairman's sound), the percussion and arrangements are never less than bracing, while the vocals occasionally leave something to be desired. As good a pan-African dancer cut as "All" represents, there is little joy in hearing admirable but showy "We can live as one" formulas trotted out again. Fortunately, gizmoz Nat Nyanza takes off guitar solos with offhand grace.

SUPER MAMA DJOMBO

SUPER MAMA DJOMBO

COCINA COCOES CD

This welcome disc situates a stellar Guinean-Bissau dance band that dissolved in the wake of political repression at home. Immediately after recording these tracks at a Portuguese studio the multiple electric guitar line-up had moved on from the Cuban influence that captivated West African musicians in the post-war era. This group was

clearly striking out its own stylistic turf, doing so with verve and tenderness. Echoes of their sound can be heard in recent recordings by Youssou N'Dour, who once opened for them, but the guitars' liquid, sweetened tone is the hallmark of a regrettably departed era. The unhammed and rambling "Allo" spotlights a guitar solo, each note's attack given proprietary shape, by Celso Miguel Frederico Hoffer that is nothing less than the sound of a heart going down in flames.

VARIOUS

ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD MUSIC: THE MUSIC OF AZERBAIJAN

ROUNDER 8216151452 CD

Among the most recent brace of UNESCO/Biemmler-Musicaphon albums issued by Rounder, this collection commemorates the unusual, regionally specific tonalities and hence intensely brought to improvisation by the Tatars Muslim musicians recorded by Radio Bakú. The best from "Little And Meijan" is rendered by two-voiced voices accompanied by the tar lute, whose longish song allows for a range comparable to the baritone guitar beloved of surf groups. The magnum or magnum, that quantum kernel of Persian music theory as an organizing mode generates music of a more severe character than its Indian counterpart, the raga. Its harmonic palette is no less sophisticated. All of the instruments heard here are homophonic, the better to achieve the actively ornamented melodies and muscular phrasing required by an ou or the dizzying internal leaps of the khenmedes (spike fiddles) during a seven minute solo by the amorous Beshe Nigra.

VARIOUS

ITALIAN TREASURY: PUGLIA: THE SALENTO

ROUNDER 8216110012 CD

The Salento region in southernmost Italy offers yet more amazeballs evidence of how lead continually fought over can also cultivate the culture of its constituents and produce fascinating musical hybrids. Greeks, Romans and various Christian sects clashed on its soil over the centuries, its folk culture more than present and that of other peoples that traded in and connected through this bridge to the Orient. Even if you ignore the wealth of regional obscurities presented on tape in 1964 by the late folklorist Alce Lomax, his documentation alone is fascinating enough, touching on the music and dance relating to the mysterious toromantic phenomenon, wherein the sack are cured by the sound of violin and, most importantly, timbrelme. Elsewhere, a ferrist artwork for a telethon poker game, performed a cappella, abets an almost searing boilng sang by an itinerant musician who accompanies himself with a light touch on acoustic guitar. Human voices activate this collection, ricocheting off tiled walls, maintaining complex harmonies even as you hear note being broken in a quarry. Often the singers hold sustained notes with uncanny timing. And when all involved suddenly drop in pitch, they resemble the concurrent movements of birds in flight. □

HipHop

Reviewed by Dave Tompkins

THE ABNORMAL YELLOW BAND BEAVAL SUMMIT/JAPANESE LESSON/BLOW YOUR WHISTLE

DELIC DISCO 7" 45"

Latin Rascal Albert Cabrera said that sometimes it's hard to come out of an edit. While this Old School electro mix is digital, it's low enough to invoke the spirit of Chet Baker, honed over with a fusillade of 80s cuts of Mantronix' "Herculean Hip Hop". Tompkin's own congas are also singled out for special treatment. A/B/C stick it to the B-boy beats as well. There's a whole sequence between "Rock Creek Park" and "Deader West", while Esther Williams' classic "Last Night Changed A Lot" becomes "Last Night These Two Japanese Guys Dismembered My Hormon Section". When it comes to 80s synths riffs, the A/B/C know the difference between evil and cliché, which is important with all these retro footwork running around. Despite all this spitzemusic, the edit understands the pre-heat-distance between Y and K, as indicated by A/B/C's parody of the Average White Band logo.

CHOCOLATE STAR CHOCOLATE STARFISH

CHOCOLATE STAR CS1544 12"

Another mix B/D semi-bootleg saves another trigger-happy Old School collector from fiscal ruin. On "Sister Joe", The Professor searches for Alice when "test of the mid comes a two" – Alice flat. Jake then takes the Professor downtown to meet a girl with a mushroom handle whil'll "need his ass down to the ground". Something must have happened because on the following track ("The Professor Here"), the Professor sounds like Wolfman Jack passing in Christmas greeting. But the drums bounce from stone floor to garage door, edging so hard they can't even hear themselves think. Likewise with "The Fox", an instrumental with fan people clapping through an aqua-fanga. The A-side bellads are sad meowing, broke, but the inclusion of Clyde Alexander's disco classic "Get To Your Love" is a contractually bizarre relief. An original pressing of Chocolate Star could pay off the legal fees if not city lines for leaving ground ass on the sidewalk.

DE LA SOUL MUCH MORE BLACKBERRY MANAGEMENT PROMO 12"

Spring is a good time for musing up words, a time to add "decided" while stabbing your toe on Maer's headphones. New De La is warm weather, especially when Dave is "popping wheeles on my bicycyle/watch my eyes twinkle". The LTD loop is an R&B spaghetti stop and DJ Premier cures all the "reverberate papoose-ass giggle", which is almost as funny as his last piece of wack shit on the see-saw theory. De La are older and less comrade, which results in informal titles like "Put your money in the bank and laid back over friends who ain't got leadership skills". Like Loni Finease once said, they're not "going out like a lit dog".

50 CENT IN DA CLUB (NIKE BOOTLEG) WHITE LABEL NO NUMBER 12"

One of 2002's best highlights was only available

on TV. It was a Nike ad composed of switches and dials and it sounded like Eric S & Rakim's "I Ain't No Juke" making a bouncy pass at The Cipele's "Ginifer Part 6". Somebody, anybody, please press it up. In the meantime, this B/C have to do. On the boob tube bootleg, 50 Cent swagger in with his cuttin' flow and wishes happy birthday to the birthday girl's best friend after punching out the down balloon dispenser. He's in it for the cake but gets no dime for his trouble. The Neptunes' snarly keyboard is a sweatshop swoosh for supermodels in babushkas and uggama-skinned Ax Jesters. They slink through the biophosphate dinging the door while the pencils outside are left gawing with loose Velcro straps around their zinkies. "Ike Nike but wait..."

DI IVORY HEAR NO EVIL VOL 2 HEAVY BROWN HHS001 CD

As of press time, no one has properly identified, much less fingerprinted, all the effusively obscure sample rap songs from Hear No Evil Vol. 1, and thus the phaze remains unclaimed. Apparently, nger's Nottingham switchoard is full of messages like the one from some guy from Canada who said "set his pet" for a copy of *Bogart's "Nessus Material"*. Likewise, Volume 2 is full of kennel-empting toots, starting with Utzschneider's classic "Bar", in which Koch Kert, a fan of pets, is "chopping up even germs" to machine gun controls. If you've completely lost your mind and somehow own this 45-only version, the accompanying lyric booklet doesn't speak for Greg Neko's half-edited beatbox but does include Ced Gee's extra-scientific bonus verse. After Ultra, every journeys to the centre of the no-name, where you hear lines like "You'll only worth two dollars with a fly", tags like Ringmaster and tales like "The Professor". All tooks are selected for goodness's sake, not rarity. "Rat Feed" is a piece of studio genius, the slowest, wendie rap song without a beat – as if someone dropped the rice on its head and thought, "Hitmen", giving King Tubby a reveal back message in his tomb while the house open the passage. The affected vocal sound like Lone Loc turned on the gas jets in a classroom made of hair and slammed his nose in Rakim's chemistry book to stay conscious. Adding insult to in-joke, very probably has two copies yet he's also sensitive to the fact that sometimes all it takes is one verse of Anteotote for a good ass stomping. And while most of these records may be impossible to find, you can blame the Hear No Evil for pick-up lines like "My MC Copone is the same guy from Get Large Posse, when he was on Egyptian Lever's label".

JAY-Z/BIG BOI/KILLERMIKE/ TWISTA POPPIN' TAGS DITF JAM PROMO 12"

When JT Swann slumped over to the "Albee Square Mall" with Biz Markie, the young corner didn't have to deal with today's disappointed traffic jams. all those folks returning Jay Z's Blueprint 2 CD. While these good cuts can be counted on one hand, "Poppin' Tags" is

the five finger discount special. Producer Kanye West dips southeast for the Organized Noise tag sale, plodding some guitar twining with Sleepy Brown singing the hook. West's batiste control is too quick for the test as rent-a-cops would only find a torn *Garrison's Book Of Records* page, the one with his "Fastest Rapper" entry, shredded in his ink-stained back pocket. Meanwhile Killer Mike hopes he can fit Eric B's old Daaper Dan Gucci into his bag and Jay just hopes for more beats like this. The whole everybody else spots what we've got, only Big Boi seems to take a look back a black pulse at a funeral, a half-empty box of Honeycombs and some hard times.

KING GEEDORAH TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER REG'DADA R0001 CD/LP

MF Doom continues to bring the "harrumph". Ever since he muzzled from Zez Xee X, MF Doom's flow has always been about as graceful as his metal heads. This further sharpshotted Icp King Geedorah, a space monaster offering his view of earthlings, hasn't limbered up his tongue but it has, if anything, made his sofi even wonder and less like sibb-f. There are almost no fake futuristic trapguh here and only a handful of ICP reverb samples. Instead, producer The Metal Fingersuit Vlips opt for hazy, elastic smudges of beats that sound like fingerwarmed DSD R&B or sonorous using the condenser mic on a handheld Panasonic cassette recorder to tape the next door neighbour listening to Sonny Stitt and Studio One. Aside from the spoken word and TV theme cut-up "One Smart Nigga", the best words go to greater master funkies. "Crackling the faulzy fause" and "bring the house down without hyping planes/Look, stock and two smoking barrels and we'll use it to fuk up more beats per minute than drum 'n' bass music". (Peter Shapiro)

NMS WOE TO THEE O LAND WHOSE KING IS A CHILD REG'DADA 60003 CD/LP

Book when Company Flow were still together. Big Jaz always seemed like the formalist, the straightforward B-boy that kept El-P's imagination and Mr Len's rhythmic in check. With the release of NMS's (*Nephilim Monitoring System*) El-B, though, Big Justus proves that his brand of Hipstop is every bit as original, committed and angry as that of his former cohorts. NMS is Big Justus's collaboration with California underground MC Delo Elektron and Woe To Thee O Land Whose King Is A Child is a drowsy, woddy, paranoid response to the Bush administration and the new wave of McCarthyism. Like at the best political records, the music here speaks as loud as the words, and the words don't beat (strings of paraded images rather than awkward and self-eviduous narrative). "Invisible Obelisk" is a death knell made out of a loop of a droning, chiming guitar that could almost be Loren Mazzone Connors, "Brave New World" is punk-onion where the South's rapid fire rapping is applied to daily cutters and the scary speed of science; "Fendi

Shoe Bomber" features overwound, sibilant drums over what sounds like a Pharrell Sanders sample. (Peter Shapiro)

DJ SHADOW DIMINISHED RETURNS NO LABEL NO NUMBER 3LCD

Taken from a BBC broadcast this past March, CD one starts with Cool Breeze and ends with a steel drum version of "Cars" that almost tops the steel drum version of "Down By The River", which is played on an earlier Gilles Peterson show. In the 70 something minutes in between, there is a pistol-packing weebie bug, a UFO snack, a guy who catches barber shops, the beatbox "Saga Of Bagging Taar", a Spanish version of "I Can't Go For That" and a man called Bruce II Def. Cool Down comes from the land of "Junglehorn" and "cattle" with "chrome wagon wheel carriages with candy paint and tumbling weed" if you're brown' Clark". From a cappellas and Dynamix 2 b/w to Alay Ali Gargler and Gold Age triphop, it's a diverse batch. Recording for Show Jazz records in 88, Raw Records Does Peppermint's Mantonio's phone and uses the off-the-hoof signal for a beat that's harder than Firebrace's red fungie (big up Don Marlo). A limited release, Diminished Returns comes with two coasters (which doesn't mean you can refine those classic Alkalohiks counters desketing porcelain works) and another CD of psyche rock worth checking.

VARIOUS CHAINS & BLACK EXHAUST JONES NO NUMBER CD

The mix of psychiatric black rock/funk from the 60s (there are no titles or info) was compiled by Dennis Carluaga, a former Skywalker intern blessed to have actually seen the failed studio closed crammed to the ceiling with old drum machines. Here, though, MC means motorcycle club and a piano gets beat up and rambles out of town with a screeching guitar vamp. That's ample cause to call yourself Blackcock and your song (which is actually four songs in one) "Yeah, Yeah". (And your B-side "Bad Cloud Overhead"). On LA Carnies' searing "Blind Mind", Linton Abrams gives his eyes to a blind man who is now groping in the dark with his woman. George "Pogy" Clinton might call him a "blind dog with a seeing-eye man", though woman in question leaves with the horn section and skips off to Youngstown, Ohio to check out Iron-Knowledge. Iron's Black Cloud has the best hand and the lowest axes – just the scrap metal from their "Show Stopper" could earn a monster tractor skid and a bleacher full of bludgeons fans. After touring as Edwin Starr's backing group, Detroit's Black Mendo recorded with Cedar in the late 80s with the incredible Elklan "Fug" Jordan, a star who once saluted the Watts Caveli on a bed of red. Black Mendo's "Cynthia-Rita" has the anxious, "boot-hoo" on record, perhaps letting the climactic quiet down of their first LP. There are rumors that this will be released legitimately early next year, but you need this now. □

Jazz & Improv

Reviewed by Andy Hamilton

SEAN BERGIN MOB BIMBLE DATA 003 CD

Tenor saxophonist Berge is from a later generation of the South African diaspora than Chris McGregor and Dudu Pukwana. He settled in Holland where he creates his own band and MOB ensemble from members of Misha Mengelberg's ICIP Orchestra. Some of the MOB Berge features on the excellent album of Berge compositions, recorded live at four dates at the Amsterdam Jazztage. Like some of Steve Beresford's songs, the opening 'Hi There' is too beautiful to be other than postmodern jazz. Presumably it's Berge's editing: 'Hi there' at the start and end, just as his big-toned tenor dominates. On the others tracks a cast of familiar suspects, including Curtis Clark on piano, Al Bear on clarinet, Walter Harris on trombone and Ben Monstey on drums, mix free and swingish antecedents.

JANE IRA BLOOM CHASING PAINT: JANE IRA BLOOM MEETS JACKSON POLLOCK ARABESQUE AP150 CD

Bloom follows a fine jazz tradition in dedicating an album to abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock, although the painter's modernism didn't extend to his musical tastes — he was a fan of Dixieland and swing. However, his White Light famously appeared as the cover of Ornette Coleman's Free Jazz in 1960, prompting critics to draw parallels between their improvisational approaches. Like Stacey Lacy, Bloom is one of the few saxophonists to focus exclusively on soprano, though she also sits debonairly on tenor. Sadly her playing is rather characterless, her purity, unlike Lacy's, blander than expressive. An uninteresting sound barely rises interest in her lines. But the album is worth savoring for the dream team of Fred Hersch on piano, Mark Dresser on bass and Bobby Previte on drums, as found on Bloom's The Red Quartet, who make a joyous sound good.

ARTHUR BLYTHE FOCUS SKYLINK 20044 CD

The 62 year old alto has expanded the two heard on his glorious Spent in the Field album from 1999, also on Savant, adding the concert grand timbre of Guus Willens' to Bob Stewart's tuba and Ceco Brooks' lit'l drums. It's an unlikely but very euphonious quartet, with the mellow yet light and almost toneless grand marimba emphasising the low end. Most pieces are by Blythe, the gentle calypso 'Night Song' is most attractive. Blythe's bluesy and often piercing wail is so immediately distinctive you forgive him resorting to his favorite licks, particularly the one that outlines the harmony. A beautiful album.

BILL FRISELL THE INTERCONTINENTALS NONE SUCH 7558795113 CD

Bill Frisell's gentler take on Americana is a valid counter to John Fahey's stark primitive, but this recording gives me doubts. In recent years he's

crossed the line between jazz and Country — or rather, introduced some jazz complexity into a Country style to beguiling effect. The problem here is that *The Intercontinentals* is more Nashville than New York; this is the album's sole focus: World Music fusion. Frisell plays with Brazilian guitars, Vinicius Cantane, Macedonian cell player Christos Gavetas, Matt Salter Canales on percussions and vocals, plus Jenny Scheinman on violin and Greg Leisz on pedal steel and slide guitar. To say that it must have been the producer's idea would unfairly fling Lee Townsend, who has served Frisell so well before,

SATOKO FUJII MINERVA LAZZARETTI LPV156 CD

SATOKO FUJII ORCHESTRA THE FUTURE OF THE PAST ENJA EMU4071 CD

The Japanese pianist and composer is amazingly prolific, but this, to borrow David Murray's comment about why records so often, she's "a pretty big employer". The Enja release is a fine exhibition of her enduring concern for the big band, and here she has attained the most stellar company yet, driven by powerful drummer Aaron Alexander. Her interest in her music comes less from melody than a restless diversity of textures and tempos, with thunderous rock beats emerging from instrumental cacophony, and grooves broken up by free passages.

Miyazawa reprises the quartet line-up of Volumen and her CMM tour last year featuring her usurped husband Natsuo Ikenaga, Takeharu Hayakawa's cavernous bass guitar, and the towering presence of Rumi's Yoshida on drums. While Volumen mostly consisted of shorter pieces, Miyazawa allows for more expansive treatment of five compositions. Post-Cool Taylor pianistic complexity is juxtaposed with rock rhythms and hypnotic, minimal bass riffs on "Warp", "Welt" is jazzier but gentler and not so dark, Hayakawa's rubbery bass solo maximally complex. An awesome recording.

JONAS HELLBORG ICON BAR300 5405 CD

Hellborg belongs to the astonishing abundance of Scandinavian bass players. He emerged in the 1980s, playing with the cooler late incarnation of John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra and gaining World Music credits with Takir Gurjeet Joshi's project in an immensely enjoyable encounter between East and West. Hellborg joins forces with rock guitarist Steve Lane and three Indian musicians — percussionists PV Selvaganesh and V Umashankar, and vocalit V Umamahesh. Styling virtuosity is allied with muscularity, in a more muscular and convincing fusion than Bill Frisell's *The Intercontinentals*.

FRED HESS RIGHT AT HOME INSTEAD 76002 CD

Tenor saxophonist Fred Hess is an original. Despite his reverence in the sleeves notes to

current heroes such as Bob Berg, Michael Brecker and Joe Lovano, and their exploitation of John Coltrane's legacy, his playing endows me if anything of Wayne Marsh, in obliqueness if not in tone. A veteran of the Denver, Colorado scene, Hess recorded this album there with pianist Marc Sabatella. His quirky compositions include "Going There", inspired by his New York visit in 2001 to record Extended Family with Paul Smilser (reviewed *The Wire* 230). Grooves are mostly implicit, and Sabatella's playing is highly chromatic and his camping sympathetic. A thoughtful and rewarding release.

ANDY LASTER'S LESSNESS WINDOW SILVER BRIGHT NEW WORLD 903982 CD

ERIK FRIEDLANDER OUAKE GIGITZERAMPHONIC GS1161 CD

Andy Laster's unusual downtown line-up on his and Ira New World project features Erik Friedlander on cello, Bryan Carron on vibes and marimba, Cuong Vu on trumpet and Michael Sun on drums. Laster, who here plays banjo saw, moved to New York in 1985 when he worked with Julian Hemphill and Herb Robertson. The Lessness ensemble was formed in 1997, and plays thoughtful, intelligent jazz with a central role for composition. "Mao", for instance, is mostly written out. Cellist Friedlander covers the bass role effectively Cuong Vu's muted trumpet buzzes through "The Rosemond", while "Helen Day" is a slightly quirky combination of waltz time and Latin rhythms. But mostly Lessness is more.

On Quake, Lester returns the favour, switching to alto sax in a quartet led by Friedlander with Stomu Takeishi on bass guitar and Satochi Takeishi on percussion. The cellist, who still plays in classical contexts, was inspired by Hank Roberts's improv cello in the string trio Aristo, and has worked with John Zorn and Dave Douglas. Quake moves from chamber and hocket to loud and fast, with Satochi Takeishi's percussionist role rather than trap drummer the results should be interesting, but they haven't quite pulled me in yet.

LUESCHER/OLSHAUSEN/SU DEAR C: THE MUSIC OF CARLA BLEY ACT! 90016 ASH142 CD

Saxist based shorthorn Nathaniel Su, from Cameron, is a little disciple of Lee Konitz with Frédéric Luescher on piano and Clotilde Olshausen on cello. He produces distinctive chamber jazz interpretations of "Pierrot", "Sing My Softly Off The Blues" and other Carla Bley ditties, together with Paul Bley's "Around Again". The playing reveals the very satisfying trio of Carla Bley, Andy Sheppard and Steve Swallow, though these three musicians have a more classical feel. I've long admired Su's cool stylings, held in tension where real impressionism is possible, while deploying a gentle vibrato at phrase endings. That the saxophonist records infrequently makes this gentle and beautiful music especially welcome.

MAX NAGL

I CRASHED MY SNOWPLOUGH RUDE 90523 013 CD

Featuring Robbie Averaun, Herbert Reimann, Jasmin Thiekar and Berndt Thurner, this CD reflects Max Nagl's sound art rather than the jazz or cafe society interests The Austrian obblot has defined his style succinctly as "music composed by someone who grew up in the country playing clarinet mostly in marching bands, learned saxophone, went to lots of rock bands and jazz bands on records and radio and sometimes live, met lots of musicians of similar backgrounds in Vienna and formed his own bands". On the title track, recorded in Australia a few years back, his six contributes high pitched whistles and whines against Averaun's bassist-like instant dromes and meditations. Another quirk from the quirky Austria.

ULLMANN/STEVENS/FONDA/ BENNIK VARIATIONS ON A MASTER PLAN LEO 10057 CD

Gebhard Ullmann is bass clarinettist with The Clefset trio, whose Oct 1, 99 was released in 1999. Here he also plays soprano and tenor sax, in partnership w/ bassist Joe Fonda, a sometime Brother associate, Michael Jeffrey Stevens on piano and drummer Hen Benink. Strikingly fluid between in and out playing, Stevens repeats the strategy of the Fonda/Stevens group's Live At The Bowery from 2000. It's a superior quality recording of a Munich gig, w/ background chatter edited out — except Fonda, when he vocalizes along with his solo. The theme on Ullmann's "Variations On A Theme" By Claude Debussy is a well disguised, though Stevens has some Debussy-style harmonies in his solo. Niina Röta's "Parlors Of Me", arranged by Ullmann, also appeared in a more bucolic version on Oct 1, 98.

MATT WILSON HUMIDITY PALMETTO PM0093 CD

Matt Wilson is an intensely melodic drummer — a quality that's often surprisingly overlooked, set least by drummers themselves. Since 1992 he's lived in New York, recording with Dewey Redman and in duet with Leo Kottke on last year's Gong With Wind. On this quartet date with longtime partner, whilst Andrew D'Angelo and bassist Yousef Inoue plus tenor saxophonist Jeff Ledner, his beautiful tones and timing feed compositions like "Thank You Bill Higgins", an Omnitone-like tribute to the late drummer, featuring D'Angelo's bluesy alto in Coleman style, and Ledner's guff toner "Not Shadow" and "Cooperstein" are bucolic clarinet fancies, with C'Angelo on a bassoon instrument, and an aco spot for Inoue. "Free Willy" is a sassy salient on "I Got Rhythm", though you'd be lucky to detect the changes, while "Don't Blame Me" and Todd Dameron's "Our Delight" are oblique nods to tradition. Wilson deserves wider recognition, and this is probably his finest album yet. □

Outer Limits

Reviewed by Jim Haynes

ANDREW DEUTSCH ELECTRONIC GARDEN ANOMALOUS NOISE CD

Andrew Deutsch has spent the majority of his life *tree building "electro-mechanical loops"* which originate from the sounds of broken music boxes as their spring motors wind down. Filtering these clanking plink-plink tones through microresonators and frequency shifters, he adds a digitized piano which uncannily sounds like many of the granular synthesis options within Max/MSP SuperCollider and other similarly versatile software programs. Many of the resulting sounds resemble the whimsical electronics of Markus Popp solo and with Moratorium. However, Deutsch adds a decidedly utilitarian interests for his Electronic Garden. He proposes these recordings are adaptations of Rudolf Steiner's ideals, in which music can strike a balance between the worldly body and the ethereal body. Deutsch means that the shimmering tones of his music should heighten the latter and calm the former. This utopian aspect of his ideas *hearkens a little too close to New Age territory* for my tastes, but the musical interludes succeed as pleasantly quirky experiences.

FORCEFIELD LORD OF THE RING MODULATOR BLUR/BLUES CD/MP3

Forcefield hail from the Rhode Island School of Design Rock, graduating straight to the high art world with their undeniably impressive skills in hand-writing brightly coloured body suits, when hyphenate the overbearing anonymity of an executioner's garb with gaudine's cuts, puppy- and kitten-crocheted pillows and cushion. Inspired more by their letting that their musical prowess, the inevitable artworld type reached its pinnacle with their performance at the 2002 Whitney Biennial, where some people speculated whether Forcefield had the potential to surpass the meta-kinetic hypotheses of The Beredore or Mike Kelley in the way their performance simultaneously evoked terror, humor, transcendence and somnolence. On the evidence of this drearily titled Lord Of The Ring Modulator, the answer is a resounding no. This unfortunate album paints Forcefield as the artworld equivalent of a one-hit wonder. For from the propulsive, art rock assault of their two performances and the earlier Third Annual Reggaetoon, this is a chunky, minor-league noise album of limp electric pulses and tepid distortion cracklings. Evidently, Forcefield have spread themselves too thin, dabbling in smug post-Heroic art gestures rather than attempting to wrangle with the complex, often impossible logic of noise.

JAVIER HERNANDO HYDRO PARHELIA GEOFONETIC/GIGANTIC/DRAMA MICROGAMMA CD

With a resume taking in such obscure outfitts as Xerox, Melodramatic Sensor and Stenocidal dating back to the early 1980s, Barcelona

based post-industrialist Javier Hernando makes the case that Spanish electronic music existed before Barcelona's SONAR festival established the Canarian capital as a node in the global electronic network. Hydro Parhelia is a quiet album of radioactive pinnacles, exploring the charms of skipping CDs, plastic bleeps and blips as they dissolve in a generous helping of delay. It works best when Hernando sets everything in reverse and foots his evocative half-melodies amidst understated, backward masked rhythms swathed in delay patterns. These tracks stand as digitally polished revisions of the spectral dub abstractions found on zones' France's Mohomusic.

ROLF MEELOK 4 (PROPOSITIONS) TARIF/TARIFTA CD

4 (Propositions) is an apt if not especially inspired name for this latest album from evocative Dutch sound artist Rolf Meelok. For each of the four tracks does indeed make a distinct proposition for a simple acoustic drama played out between foreground and background, loud and quiet, synthetic and natural, etc. For Meelok, who has worked extensively in the art of sound resistant both solo and as a member of Goen, Krotte Maak and Tieluk 2020, this is another very humble record to add to his discography. He's at his best when sonic patterns emerge within the quiet flutterings of manipulated field recordings or granular recombinations, which obfuscate the reflected sounds of the listener's body within his compositions. Out of a concern to avoid any specific meanings attaching themselves to his work, Meelok consistently pulls back to near silence when a tone lingers around long enough to stimulate images in his listeners, thus suffusing its status as pure sound. The suggestive vocal gasps from the third untitled track here might carry a hint of Luis Ferrer's psychosocial fares, but Meelok's unyielding control doesn't allow for more than a brief titillation.

DANIEL MENCHE BEAUTIFUL BLOOD AUCH A ALÉNCD009 CD

Having towed the Americana Noise community for almost a decade, Daniel Menche channels the physicality of raw tones into combustible expressions of dance and discord. Within his numerous recordings, he engages sound as martial combatant, grinding, ramshelling and slashing his source materials into incendiary climates attenuated with arolundling abrasions like any majestic warrio. Menche has gained a considerable amount of wisdom about his adversary, and over the past couple of years, his strategies have shifted towards dialogue, compromise and the possibility of reconciliation. You can even say "Zen" to him these days without running the risk of eliciting some glibly sonic rebuke. His recent music has geared down his once characteristic apocalyptic intensity in order to afford expansive dances speckled with shimmering vibrations. Even so, he's still too maniac to enter

for his near minimalist studies to be mistaken for Zen meditation exercises. Here the music rapidly oscillates between metallic resonances, jet engine roars and soft sputtering electronics

DAVID LEE MYERS & THOMAS DIMUZIO UNCERTAIN SYMMETRY KORN PLASTICS KP0004 CD

CHRIS CUTLER & THOMAS DIMUZIO DUST REMEGACORP CD RECORDED CD

Some 12 years ago, West Coast electroacoustic composer Thomas Dimuzio and feedback sculptor David Lee Myers were working on a collaboration, when Myers abruptly dismantled all the feedback machines, which he had used on the tinnitus-buzz albums Also Sprach Zarathustra and *Root* he made under the name Arcane Device, and ceased producing his brand of metal machine music. Happily, he is now back in business, and here the two rekindle his long stalled collaboration with accomplished sound manipulator Dimuzio. His feedback machines might be ancient history, but Myers retains his lust for their totalitari fittings. For their pointillist exercise in the use of feedback, Dimuzio and Myers slice and twist their sonic waste into icy cascading silvers. At peak intensity, their jagged music threatens to pierce the skin.

Dimuzio's collaboration with drummer and RoF boss Chris Cutler has a tendency to seed interesting ideas that never come to fruition. Their decision to produce the performance on Dust as a synthesis between room microphones and mixing techniques might account for the music's failure to sputter this time round. Not a wise decision, considering that the spaces when these pieces were recorded had the acoustic clarity of a concrete warehouse. On Dust, their second album together, the duo's electronics and percussion impenetrable, soliter jazz crust clusters over moribund synth tones and palely squeaking. Cutler's persuasive detailing is anything but bright, and most of the bass frequencies have the sonic impact of soggy tissue paper hitting a wet floor. For all the care they took with their mic set-up, in the hope of capturing the spontaneity of these performances, there's no getting around the fact that the album sounds terrible.

MORTNORTHAM A GREAT AND RIVERLESS OCEAN MYSTERY SEA MS005 CD-R

SETH NEHIL UMBRA EDITION: NO NUMBER CD

Working almost exclusively with the symbolic elements earth, air, fire and water, the way Michael Natham (aka Uteli-bors lower case sound artist mortnorthand) achieves sympathetic vibrations from field recordings and staved based events is loaded with evocative mythological potential. Within his dense layers of diners, Natham mirrors the

morphological complexities shared by things: tiny (the refolding of molecules) and massive (the global shift of oceanic and atmospheric disturbances). With a title like *A Great And Riverless Ocean*, Natham's archetypes clearly invoke the aqueous environment — also apparently an ongoing concern of his label here, Mystery Sea. Yet his source material is somewhat unrefined. He stretches water-borne sounds from a kelp horn — which is probably derived from a floating kelp plant turned into a makeshift resonator — and the ergonomic "wah-wah computer" into a hypogean turbulence of subtle shifts and timbral reflections. *A Great And Riverless Ocean* conjures an equally compelling twilight space between conscious and unconscious perceptions of reality.

Seth Nehil has worked with Natham on a handful of releases and in the sound arts organization Dogmatiques. Undisputedly a host of done studies, holds some obvious similarities to Natham's work. For instance, both the two Northern Thugs on the swelling choruses of sound that occur when layering multiple versions of its source on top of each other. They also define their work as a form of sonic typography that articulates the patterns and ghostly echoes within ambient spaces, while drawing scientifically poetic analogies to the body and the environment. However, Nehil harvests comparatively more active sound fields for their resonant tonalities. These often reflect an interest in performative actions such as rubbing textured objects against each other. Umbra is as a far more urgent recording than Natham's latest subdued production, yet both are incredibly strong works that warrant favorable comparisons to Phillip Niblock and Franses López.

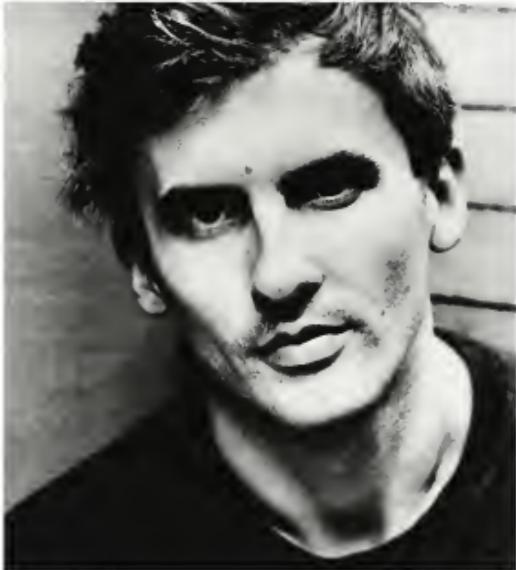
PHILIP SAMARTZIS MORT AUCH VACHES STALPLAAT NO NUMBER CD

Australian sound artist Philip Samartzis revels in the technological mediocrity that meet sound engineers spend lifetimes attempting to eliminate. Such obsolescence over surface noise began in the 1980s, when Samartzis worked with Andrew Curtin as Gun to produce a coarse, lo-fi technoball of turntablist events and collage detritus. Recently, he has taken a more clinical approach that is heavily reliant upon digital technologies to emphasize each and every sonic blipish. His commission for the Mort Auch Vaches series is riddled with steady streams of abrasive glitches, appearing simultaneously as rattling run-on growves on abused vinyl and as frayed cables popping with misaligned connections.

Despite his application of a digital sheen to heighten the white-hot energy within each pinprick of sound, Samartzis never corrals this noise into the gitchoisean structures championed by Raster-Noton. Rather, he leaves them as open abstractions of electric fizziness started with titillate feedback, indeterminacy buzzards and occasionally jarring chunks of silence. □

Print Run

New music books: devoured, dissected, dissed



Key player! Paul Bley, mid-60s

ALL MUSIC GUIDE TO JAZZ

Vladimir Bogdanov,
Chris Woodstra & Stephen
Thomas Erlewine (editors)

BACKBEAT PBK \$29.95

BY ANDY HAMILTON

The All Music Guide to Jazz, now in its fourth edition, is a further US rival to Richard Cook and Brian Morton's long established Penguin Guide to Jazz On CD, generally regarded as the most comprehensive and incisive on the market. It's similar in important respects to the American MusicHound volume reviewed in *The Wire* 190. This is a heavyweight encounter: Cook and Morton has 1748 pages, MusicHound 1390 and All Music 1412, but while Cook and Morton weighs in at 1.6 kg, All Music is almost as massive as MusicHound at 1.9 kg. In fact, All Music is a mere senuis rival to the Penguin bible than MusicHound proves to be – not least because it's got much smaller type and, I'd guess, twice as much text. Unlike Cook and Morton, All Music discusses deleted as well as currently available albums, though unlike MusicHound it doesn't attempt to distinguish them; in contrast to Cook and Morton, it has a substantial blog for every musician.

The All Music Guide attempts to cover all stylistic and historical areas, and goes as far

back as Cook and Morton – to Buck Johnson (1879-1949) and Freddie Keppard (1889-1933). In contrast to the purist Penguin guide, it chooses genres by including people like Rob Abou-Khalil, Antekola Carlos Johnson, Raymond Scott, R&B tenorists Hal 'Comrade' Singer and Willis 'Gator' Jackson, Fred Frith and The Last Poets. Where All Music has Kenny G, Slim Gaillard, Eric Gale, Rodger Galiano, Jim Galloway and Hal Galper, Penguin has Slim Gaillard, Rodger Galiano, Jon Galván and Hall Galper. All Music takes the MusicHound approach to an extreme, often with several contributors for each artist, reviewing one or more albums each – and because these reviews aren't well-coordinated, there's considerable repetition.

While there's a consistency to Cook and Morton, with the two editors contributing all the entries, All Music has over 200 contributors, though on almost every page there are reviews by Scott Yanow, who seems to have written a substantial portion of the book. Since many of the writers are writing about their favourites, there's sometimes more of a fan's perspective than a critical attitude. But in many cases the contributors have sought out obscure labels, and I was intrigued to discover that there's recorded evidence of Steve Lacy's unlikely

early career in Dixieland (The Complete Steve Lacy on Fresco from 1954). Surprising omissions include Rob Mansur, Enrico Presumard, Carlo Actis Dato, Jay Clayton, Mike Osborne, Stan Tazan, Sutton Morris and Jason Moran. Highlights are long entries on Joe McPhee, Satsuo Fujii, Evan Parker, Arthur Blythe, Steve Lacy, Paul Bley and Frank Lowe, and briefer but valuable ones on Boris Berman, Bill Naderling, Paul Pinhey and Mata Gudastaran.

The book begins with thumbnail sketches of the various jazz styles that have evolved over the past century – bop, boogie-woogie, cool, free improv, etc – and concludes with longer essays on history and genre, the earlier ones mostly by Scott Yanow and some excellent later ones by Eugene Chadbourne including "Latin Jazz", the "NYC Scene 1980-2000" and the "Chicago Scene 1980-2000". Chadbourne explains how Stevie Ray Vaughan was as critic Stanley Crouch and saxophonist Eric Rivers organised real loft festivals in summer 1977; it's a fight on the streets of SoHo, Rivers gets the better of Crouch, which soon before begins the latter's dallie of avant-garde jazz ("Music, Myself" three lines of influence on each instrument, and even include accordion). Other quirks include an entry on British dance-band leader Ambrose by someone called Uncle Dave Levita, who gives three to five

star ratings to each of the discs he reviews. In fact even though each entry aims at completeness, three to five stars is the norm – seems like almost nobody ever recorded a dad album. Some discs are mentioned without a review, while Michael C. Nease gets a credit, and maybe even got paid, for this critique of Harold Gusky's *The People's Grove*, "Seasophont" who worked with Dinah Washington. The all-star cast includes Ray McKinley (sax), Bobby Rose (guitar) and Norman Simmons (drums).

Inevitably given the book's scope and the number of contributors, there are a number of crucial missteps and odd judgments, and the sheer variety of opinions is bewildering. For example, Scott Bley is described as participating with Jimmy Giuffre in the "first jazz trio to introduce microtonal improvisation", though I didn't read that early 60s group making any bigger thing of microtonality than other jazz improvisers; but Bley is interestingly located as "the first dancet – and for a long time only – counter to Cecil Taylor's explosive panmix" (presumably a looo jazz). Nevertheless, The All Music Guide remains an essential purchase for any jazz lover or aspiring jazz lover, but you'll need to get your bookshelves reinforced, and unless you want to read it at a table, start lifting some weight... ☐

THE DEVIL'S SON-IN-LAW: THE STORY OF PEEITE WHEATSTRAW & HIS SONGS

PAUL GARON

CHARLES H KOSTER \$19.95 PBK + CD

BY MHN PENMAN

Paul Garon is a living American surrealist whose previous works include a canonisation of the glorious Memphis Winnie, so he already has my vote, before we even cut the pages of this lovely pink leather and chicken yellow cover and step tentatively onto the terrain of the Devil's Son-in-Law.

Amidst a plethora of useful illustrations is a lovely diagrammatic graph by Franklin Rosemont called 'The Luciferian Gestalt, Or The Origin Of Song', which plots the head of blues icon Peeite Wheatstraw into a lattice of signs and anagrams, and I'm tempted to say it's worth the price of admission alone even if the book is half bad; which it isn't. Devil's Son-in-Law is part of a lifetime project for Garon, who's written on the 'poetic power of the blues', and she's split the lyrics of shadow men like Peeite Wheatstraw as both identifiers in their own right (and writing, and riting), and as due references of their culture and time.

I can't remember reading a book on the blues that didn't send me to sleep after either Stanley Booth's *Rhythms* (or John Fahey's *Little*

monograph on Charley Patton); before that, maybe the Great Marcus chapter on the myths of Steagin Men in *Mystic Town*. The latter is a good reference point, as it happens. Garon's basic contention is that such common-property nickname as The Devil's Son-in-Law or The High Sheriff of Hell (cooly) are hand-down archetypes, Light-*like* streaks which each singer, speaker or writer in turn can mould to their own face.

Peeite Wheatstraw was born William Bunch in either 1902 or 1904, in East St Louis, and died there in 1941, in the unfortunate evening on a crossroads of a Buick and a freight train. This story may already look familiar — echoes of Buddy Bolden, Robert Johnson, other mythic musical gastronomes. Except Bunch-as-Wheatstraw — both solo or with a politch range of musical partners — left us 160 songs on B1 records. Garon's original text dates from 1970, but this reprint (from the notable liberatory socialist publishers Charles H Kost) comes with greatly helpful CD attached. It's able to read and listen, in parallel, makes all the difference here. I'd imagine, otherwise, Garon's text might at times feel a bit dry and quote-heavy, lily-wise. As it is, it can be read at a sitting, with the CD on, a series of minor epiphanies in store like a living realisation of Walter Benjamin's dream of a living writing in which there is a diabolical FLASH of

recognition when the stones of the Past is struck by the first of present research. The CD seems crucial to this success (although Garon also makes good use of pamphlets, photos, postures, bits, etc), and is a good pointer for other publishers to follow down the road.

In his way, bunch-as-Wheatstraw feels as contemporary as yesterday's 'street-on gun charges' rapper. As far as Wheatstraw the singer goes, his voice is not a pretty thing; it's harsh, abundant, rough, scratchy. Echoes of Bukka White, Leedale, A RUFYNUCK voice, far more *Busta Rhymes* or *Dr. D*'s Bastard than something more high and lonesome and seriously romantic. An impression reinforced (the steel pier or ghetto concert turned to art brief) by his intermission launching into loosely idiomatic slang — like 'Oh, little girl! BOOGISH!' (from 'Six Weeks Old Blues'). If it's gritty in texture, the voice does have a healthy hummability, certainty, squeezing a preternatural amount of word count into the constraint of strictly metered lines.

Peeite Wheatstraw was a party animal, but one who taught the suggestion of forgotten knowledge, unpaid debt. We get blues as community news-service, and political complaint, as well as jazz bandy. Garon's is a subtle demonstration of how a marginal figure, a forgotten man, who had a narrow stylistic row,

in a stranded corner of a single neighbourhood, for a fatally short career, can nevertheless bequeath us his own kind of riches. As Peeite, Bunch has something to say about all the following subjects and more: boozes, kidnappings, the take-home, the po'-leed (some things are eternal), suicide, weather, Seven Crows, spider webs, detectives, gambling, team sports. It's far from rote, and there is much that is sheer linguistic PLAY going on here. (Other figures indicated here include Leadbelly, Stingray and Mater Livingsend. Either of whom I'd be happy to buy a drink for.)

Garon's (widely) poem is (widely) understated but it emerges all the same: he makes a strong case for this kind of unidealised un-fussy un-refined vernacular speech, as a 'site of resistance', as simultaneously poetic trace and provisional result. But it's not a point he belabours to the detriment of the cannily evoked texture of a moment in time — and togezay — which seems to contain mutitudes. (Multitudes of pseudonymous stories.)

"HARD" some aim, ain't it? Wheatstraw's low-key but shivering tenor barks out off the CD. Such moments still have power to stop the blood. "His name was night," says a contemporary of Wheatstraw's. It rings still, thinning in no small part to Garon's daintily handled obsession with the man-myth. □

THE SECOND SENSE: LANGUAGE, MUSIC AND HEARING

ROBIN MACONIE
SCARECROW PRESS HK\$180

BY ANDY HAMILTON

Robin Macomie was an assistant of Stockhausen who, like most of them, eventually fell out with the Master, but not before compiling the invaluable Stockhausen On Music. He also produced the very worthwhile titles *The Concept Of Music* and *The Sciences Of Music*, and this new "volume of narrations about music" picks up on themes discussed there. Inspired by a course on music appreciation Macomie once taught, he describes it as a course in "listening skills" which emphasises classical music because it's the best material for that purpose. More introductory than his earlier books, with more background on classical composers, Macomie nonetheless conveys some subtle and refreshing ideas. Underlying themes include the idea of music and musical instruments as signalling devices, and the reveal of an ancient conception of music as science as well as art. Although he's as short-winded as anyone at, before, where Macomie scores is in his suggestive, often idiosyncratic, sometimes intriguing shift on the philosophy of music.

The earlier chapters are the least satisfying — or maybe I just found them too introductory. Chapter one begins with an at length broad definition of music as "any acoustic activity intended to influence the behaviour of others". The roar of a lion or the chirping of a bird, like a concert or symphony, can be understood as an "acoustic signalling process... In every case there is a need to get the attention of an audience

and deliver a message", Macomie claims. This is one of his frequent themes, but it needs a lot more elucidation than he gives it, despite numerous examples. Handel's *Water Music*, for instance, "signifies a special occasion... [The music says]: King George is keen to communicate with his subjects"; 2. He has a powerful voice; 3. He represents order and harmony; 4. He is in charge." A similar message might come from a car at a red light pumping up. Hiphop at 120 dB later. Macomie repeats his comment in *The Concept Of Music* that a child running around shouting in a new environment is researching it sonically.

Another key theme is music and science, "Plainchant is [an] expression of science presented as musical art", Macomie claims. He develops an intriguing parallel between the superimposed scales and detailed human ornament of a Gothic cathedral, and the prolonged vowels of medieval composer Peter's *Viderunt Omnes* and its jolly and intricate dance rhythms. He explains how the extremely long reverberation time of a cathedral acoustic is due not just to its size and volume, but also to the wet surface area expanded by irregularities of ornamentation, resulting in complex sound reflection. Macomie distinguishes three kinds of musical spectral space (exploiting near distance and directional effects); virtual space (the limitation of these in recording, for instance), and pitch space (the sense of a musical note being high or low). But again Macomie is too brief, for a fuller discussion you need to turn to Roger Scruton's *The Aesthetics Of Music*, where the essential alarms about real causality between sounds and virtual causality between tones survive the conservative, anti-modernist presentation. Scruton develops

Peter Schaeffer's compelling claim that musical experience involves acoustical experience of a world of tones abstracted from their physical origins as sounds, which calls into question Macomie's focus on signalling.

Still exploring the connection between music and science, Macomie describes the origins of the pipe organ as an instrument to check the uniformity of air pressure in different outlets of a Roman underfloor heating system. He repeats that the ritual Industrial Revolution began in 1750 when Josiah Wedgwood, attending a performance of one Haydn's "London" Symphonies, realised he could apply the division of labour of the activists to the manufacture of quality chitarrone. On the development of orchestral instruments, Macomie comments that the spike on a cello and the legs of a piano don't just move the instrument to the right height, they also feed bass responses into the floor and room structure. The harpardon in a Basque orchestra is primarily for members of the orchestra to hear — it has the conductor's role.

Other chapters include "Mouth Music" on Kartikeya and text-based sound art, and "Discordance" — notation that is — where Macomie reports the interesting story that Samuel Beckett, one of the first writers to use dots to indicate the length of held notes, once rebuked an actor for passing for only these dots instead of four. "About music and the moving image, compares DM Griffith's use of long shots to capture multiple incidents within a single frame, with Charles Egan's simultaneous presentation of different musical events in pieces like Washington's Birthday. The chapter on recording, "Memory", discusses the novel remastering technique of the now defunct

archived classical label Nimbus Records. Instead of direct transfer from 78s, they recorded from playback on a contemporary gramophone with plain celluloid spindle needle, allowing for less frictional noise and greater bass response.

But Macomie's aesthetic reflections on high fidelity, frustratingly obscure in *The Concept Of Music*, have become perverse. Multi-microphone recording — to pick out solo passages in a symphony orchestra, for instance — doesn't give greater clarity, as Macomie suggests, just greater separation or prominence. More bizarrely he writes that "the traditional symphony orchestra is essentially a monaural musical space intended for single channel reproduction", claiming that stereo only really brings greater realism for works like Monet's *Hospice* or Gainsborough's *Canaan*, which have a spatial separation unusual among classical compositions. In an earlier chapter Macomie rejects the doctrine of interest in spatial effects between Monteverdi and the classical orchestra, "invincible when the magnificent acoustic spaces that gave rise to Renaissance polyphony are abandoned for smaller and lighter acoustic enclosures". But it's strange that he neglects the fact that our two ears yield spatial perception of sound, listen to a stereo recording and it's not easy to guess the size of recording venue, and whether the virtual listener is close to the orchestra or in the back row of the stalls. Maybe this is Macomie repeating Stockhausen's onniscience of the traditional orchestra and the concert hall stereo facing in angles, which reflects the possibility of "orchestral polyphony". But when he is just being provocative and not perverse, *The Second Sense* is an entertaining read — an unusual book that's highly recommended. □

The Inner Sleeve

Selected this month by Kim Hiorthøy

Cat Power: Moon Pix (Matador) 1998 (photos: Roe Ethridge)

In 1999 I got to borrow a flat off a friend of a friend in Copenhagen. His name was Flemming. Flemming had this kind of display rack for LPs on his wall, in which he kept the records he had been listening to last. The rest of his substantial vinyl record collection (at least compared to mine) sat on a sturdy shelf to the side, in alphabetical order, with all spines in perfect alignment ("Yes, it is sick," he told me later). Before putting my bags down (Flemming had left), I went over and picked up Cat Power's *Moon Pix* which was sitting in

Flemming's fancy rack. I didn't really like the muse at first, but I kept listening to it because I really wanted to like a record that I liked looking at so much. It's not only that the photographs on the back and front by Roe Ethridge are so good, it's the whole impression, and because I don't have a life, I can spend days obsessing over these things. The cut corners, the white borders, the corny-ness of Chas Marshall's kind of posing but also not posing and almost the same on both sides but white on the back, and the way her teeth look, and

eyes, and the red writing on the front and the strange words, and I didn't know if it was a band or if the band's name was Moon Pix or Cat Power or what, and the flowers and her hand as if she is coming out of some forest or something, and of course I'm being pathetic and I should have chosen some cool Designers' Republic sleeve or something, but *Moon Pix* is the best sleeve that I know. □ Based in Oslo, Kim Hiorthøy is an artist, musician, photographer, film maker, and graphic designer, most notably for the Rune Grammofon label



CAT POWER / MOON PIX



11 SONGS AUSTRALIA 1998

Cross Platform

Sound in other media. This month: Ken Hollings finds virtual cities, digital earthquakes and viral ruins in the shattering audiovisuals of Semiconductor



Earthquake ethos: Semiconductor's Ruth Jarman and Joseph Gerhardt, plus stills from their apocalyptic animations

When they perform live, there's nothing to see. Just two figures hunched over laptops in darkness, arms occasionally reaching through the field of light cast by a carefully positioned lamp. Nobody's really paying much attention to Ruth Jarman and Joseph Gerhardt, the shadowy duo behind Semiconductor's audiovisual assaults upon human consciousness. Over the past four years, from their hideaway in Brighton on England's south coast, they have been creating a stream of sound films, computer-animated music videos and multimedia happenings that explore the deep new terrain opening up in the cracks between the visual and the auditory, the abstract and the figurative, the spontaneous and the preprogrammed. On screen, an electrical storm rages in slabs of the dark sky between tower blocks. Cities of gigantic proportions come apart, reassembling themselves according to a disturbing logic that only they seem to understand. Cellular entities battle each other in a dazzling submolecular domain. Dimensions heave and shift. All sense of scale and stability has long since disappeared. Semiconductor is the brand name for digital noise and computer anarchy.

"We spend a lot of time removing default settings in the computer which try to keep things 'clean' or 'realistic' and alternatively try to find approaches which may disrupt the way software has been trained to present information," Jarman and Gerhardt explain. "We need to steer it rather than be steered by it. The computer is considered to lack soul, but our demands require it to overcome this."

Advances in the real-time processing of audiovisual data not only mean that old hierarchical relationships between music and moving imagery are being dismantled, but new hybrid forms are also coming into being. The line between abstraction and representation is rapidly becoming blurred. Reflecting electronic music's plunge into digital noise and sample degradation, Semiconductor have proposed the notion of "Artificial Expressionism", an appropriately functional term for a historically messy territory. "It appears as a contradiction," they concede, "yet it's actually suggesting something playful. It informs a pledge between the artist and the computer. The 'artificial' is representing something very right which exists as a series of rules and made up of zeroes and ones. By bringing expression to this, which is the human element, we are introducing a form of chaos

which disrupts any predetermined outcome."

The perfect expression of this creative chaos lies in the tensions the duo chart between the self-replicating grandeur of urban architecture and the forces of nature activated in storms and earthquakes. "They set a scale, a human scale and a point of reference. Earthquakes and natural disasters are reminders of our place in our constructed environments and of the bigger picture. We use them as animation tools to deconstruct and mess things up. They are tools, in the same way computers are to us." From the dancing buildings in *Earthquake Film*, giving visual form to songlines 'sung' into being by an earthquake, to the electoral metropolis of *Retropolis* and sombre flickering of inaudible *Chess*. Part 1, Semiconductor trace the outline of structures in a state of flux, and mark the effect of sound travelling through the visual order of things.

In 2000, Semiconductor took the step of releasing eight of their sound films on the *Hi-Fi Rise: Sonic Cities From Another Timeline* DVD, one of the first ever independently released DVD-ROMs. The interface for accessing the ROM presented the film choices within an architectural arena awaiting exploration. "*Linear*" shows the subatomic vibrations of a city made up of tiny resonating wires; "*New Antics*" captures simple life forms in action; while "*Migration*" offers a voyage through a constantly evolving landscape. Also included is their sense-shredding 60-second "sound recording of the 20th century", "*A2 of Noise*".

"With this piece we started with a single black frame of video and added a filter that cleans and sharpens the image each second for the one-minute duration, similarly with the audio, starting off with a one-second sound clip of noise and using a noise reduction process to sterilize the information. So as each medium of sight and sound had a digital cleansing process applied to them it brought out qualities and matter that wasn't there before and letting the computer reveal something very true to itself but detected by us. This introduced a nice contradiction, trying to clean pure noise, where noise is all the unwanted information we experience." Created in 1999 and lexically tipping Russo's 1913 Futurist tract *The Art Of Noise*, as scrambled digital grimelessness expresses, as Semiconductor explain it, "a growing paranoia of civilization imploding or even exploding, and that this was to be longed for, not feared".

Also included on the DVD is a selection of work by other artists working in the same area of sound film and music video, including *People Like Us* and Yvette Klein. Semiconductor have worked with a number of musicians and labels, most notably creating music videos for Fat Cat Records and DAT Politics, creating sleeve art for innovative Mikrofisch offshoot Supremat, and becoming resident visual artists for Warp's recent Nest club nights in London.

"Not only does this allow us to develop our skills and see new potentials in our relationship with the computer, but we get to farm work and take risks we wouldn't necessarily do in our own work. Fat Cat in particular have a very brusque approach towards their artists, and their reputation proves this pays off. You don't often meet producers who generously give you total freedom. Fat Cat also lends us their audience, giving our work a different context."

Standouts have included the dreamy video narrative for "Green Grass Of Tunnel" by Iceland's Múm, transforming the lighthouse and valley where the group used to live into a darkly protean version of Moemin Valley, and QT-Digital Anthras, a delirious pixel world where viruses battle it out for the survival of the fittest, accompanied by QT's 56-second composition "ojo". The duo has also been picked to set up a site specific installation with sound animations to accompany work by sculptor Richard Wentworth at Venice Biennale's Zenobia Pavilion, opening this month.

Digital Anthras, which now forms part of their live audiovisual set, points towards a regime in which animated forms hurl themselves, like abstract cartoon characters, into real-time conflict. "We program our own 3D environments which we navigate and have audio triggers synced with animations. The alternative is to fall for digital clichés or use real-time programs which tend to control the output." Expectations are dislocated; senses re-engaged. "Noise is unwanted sensory information." Semiconductor remark in relation to their live work. "In the world of computers everything is clean, so for humans to live comfortably they need to add some noise. The idea of noise is both visual and audible. We see a parallel of senses: not a joining of two senses, but [treating them as] the same thing. Feels like computer anarchy. Computers can only simulate it." □ Website: www.semiconductorltd.org

Cross Platform



Left: Miles on myth; Miles Davis on DVD. Right: Ego Trip's Wheel Of Fortune at KMF's Pop Music Conference

THE MILES DAVIS STORY

COLUMBIA/LAUREL 20140404 DVD

He was a musician, Miles, not a boxer, not a pimp, not the mayor of Hardass street. He's installed now as a given on the Raasai-kat cultural index, which is how glossy new hip-shape Kasper gets round its iconoclasts these days — by making one form of glossy B&W or other man there, effing them the trouble of actually having to listen to it (God forbid!) argue the toss with them.

You do wonder if a thumbred-asse Paul Whitehouse sketch about sonny living Miles might not be far more in the spirit of Miles than some self-servingly sober documentary which that profile (directed by Miles Obis, originally shown on Channel 4 in 2001), while it isn't, may as Blackpool sand on summer holidays, it's many miles from THE GUTTY OF CLOUTERENCE any DVD could and maybe ought to reference and embody.

Documentaries like this, they seem to have everyone and everything, but then the next ride you think: hang on, that didn't answer (or even ask!) the even basic questions about... what did Miles have a sense of humour? (Would he have found that Paul Whitehouse sketch it funny?) Or was his 'wit' dry and heavy and dangerously unstable? If he had called him an Imp of the Perverse to his coiled-up face, whatever this hot factor is what I miss in stolid, horonble abet, passingly X-confidante profiles like this — an itch of perversity that might mirror, if only glancingly, the flight of his subject, who was, after all, a very surprising musician, and not a cavafile model, not a political lobbyist, and not someone who let jazz become a set of traffic lights and a white box you were either IN or OUT.

If we can't yet imagine a similar doc about Anthony Brandon, say or George Russell, that already says a mouthful, I think, about what is going on here as an example of the 'have your cake and eat it' approach, in you get, kestos for 'done Miles', but still get viewing figures via the sourious sub-pick staff about drugs and illness and mismanagement and retreat and blood and faulness a quasi-salacious POV which

throws everything in without getting us within hating distance of the insoluble truth of a parched, vulgar's-veg solo.

(What it were even best not to know Miles from a hole in the air? What it were best to know the inside — like Joanne Moreau's character in *Lip To The Scalp*, wiz, to be conscious of this rainy day music as evn a whisp of unreadable destiny in year own lonely city air?) As far as music goes, some of the shadow too can be caught here between the police-coach interview lines, nice decent boys like delectable, McDougal, Cesca, who for once in their life let the sound of demonic shapes come flooding down and out of their sleeves. Miles needed them — this richly black panther whose most fluid breakthrough CLICKED within the collective mindshape of white fellow travellers, this electronic hounding whose own tastes run to Nebulae and Revel. But the partners more obviously over him solo, have any of them ever again bristled against anything like Miles' moment intensity or invention or grace? (Some even needed a new RELIGION after Miles, and what does that maybe tell us?)

Miles has seen, then, doesn't cursor out Miles as sonny magus, Miles as sonic crucible, Miles as racial/cultural alchemist, first reducing (grinding down people) then elevating (raising his players' game) using only his mouth and his fingers and his ear, that strange, unknowable place Miles's ear, his back turned to audience, not as a sign of rebuff, or of ignorance, assent, Jeannine comes first here, but of his own, not seeing, Hear what I think, don't judge who you are, and what if someone made a documentary like Miles heard the sky? Like Miles heard his own blood? Like Miles heard the approach of the colours... End?

GIL SCOTT-HERON BLACK EXPERIENCE REVISED SHRAPPER SMADV011 DVD

BY MIAN PENNMAN

Gil, one of history's nice guys... or at least, that's the easy option to push, and this profile sticks to that view, no shadow side, things nice and laid back and Gil's unibrow and shap as always but at times maybe looking like a tiger padding on his

best behaviour for a job interview, but mainly it's good good Gil Scott-Heron, still alive, nicely tanky, breathing in and breathing out, still his handsome for what — how old must he be now?, a man who took his anger seriously enough that he found a new framework for it to gimbol in and if sumin' ain't no tric to watch him speak — marking words best! and job and turn — or let your head dance to the sprightly live music, or follow him as he goes strolling through Washington on a red dotted line somewhere between the folks on the hill and the ghetto, somewhere between the folks on the hill and the killing floor... and on he's been there before, alright, a man with intermittent crackly-boom problems that maybe just may indicate that living inside Gil's skin ain't always simply the groovy Jazz Café soul picos we'd like to think.

This is a fair's taper nothing very radical or head burning or even GWD about it, and even very current ignore it, it being mostly a re-mix of Gil's yesterday thang (thus: Ronald Ray gun' jokes), not that I snort it's all goddam turn and return to it again and again in those mean red moods when I need to feel there is still hope at large in the world... but I warmed more: I wanted more because he was one of the people who taught me to always want more, especially of the people you most cherish.

Queso he grouse and growl at Spike Lee films like the rest of us, does he cry out loud at The Bush Family sitcom or laugh at The Simpsons (and does he do most identify with them?), does he mock Faulkner, who was it first incanted poetry in his bones... how's he feeling right now, today, in America?

POP CONFERENCE 2003 SEATTLE EXPERIENCE MUSIC PROJECT

USA
BY PHILIP SHERBURNE

It felt risky, somehow, bringing together so many members of the North American popular music criticism establishment under one roof. Especially this roof, the rippling metallic lid of Frank Gehry's Foster-inspired building for Seattle Experience

Music Project, with the spire of the Space Needle towering over it, looking like nothing so much as a gigantic lightning rod. If lightning had struck, well — suffice to say that would have been no one left but the biggers.

Organized by Eric Westward and a programme committee including EMP's Ann Powers, Griff Marcus, The Village Voices Robert Christgau, Princeton's Daphne Brooks, and the New York Times' Kelote Sanneh, among other critics, EMP's second annual Pop Conference brought together over 100 academics and journalists to address the theme, 'Skip A Beat: Rewriting The Story Of Popular Music'.

The two days of presentation and discussion were largely fruitful, running from the historical to the totally hysterical. A theme as broad as this year's, of course, could encompass any number of topics, and so panels ranged from Oxytocin to 'art music' to sampling to gender. Daphne Brooks read Jeff Buckley through the filter of Nina Simone and Black feminist rock criticess Jon Camarota considered the rise of the Southern bumptum rapper. Tim Lawrence explores the material history of New York underground disco, while Charles Koenigsoff offered a fascinating musicalological reading of 'essential' disco.

Some of the best presentations arose from the paper formerly known as Karp and Silkworm's Tim Madrigal explored the hemerocallis of bed rock, piecing together a multimedia presentation brimming with pick slides, piano estimates, and the 'cowbell as universal turn-down organizer'. And New York's Ego Trip crew, veterans of underground and mainstream HipHop publishing, used the Whedon Of Fortune format to spin on just about every angle of the rap game, with categories ranging from politics ('Political Rap: Go The Fuck Back To Africa') to authority ('Which White Music Critic Thinks He Knows More About Rap Than Us? (Answer: All of You)'). The crew's unapologetically non-affectionate-affected approach to gender ('Women In Rap: Who Cares?') drew as share of fire, quite deservedly. But then Gangsta disregard for their craft was refreshing in a world of PC academics and



Carsten Nicolai's *Television* (left) and Bertrand Lavier's *Head Spaces et Vectors*



(Bertrand Lavier)

professional courtesy. As a redemptive gesture, perhaps, they led the room full of critics in a karaoke singalong to Billy Elliot's "Work It". The moment of levity might not have resonated the story of popular music, but it reinforced the reasons that critics, more often than not, are best left doing the typing, not the singing.

VECTORS: DIGITAL ART OF OUR TIME NEW YORK COURTYARD GALLERY AT THE WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER USA

BY LINA GRUENINGER-RUSSELL

New York's digiart returned to the opening of the tenth incarnation of the New York Digital Salon —

the annual international exhibition of digital art organized by the School of Visual Arts. To mark the anniversary the curators set out to stage the most ambitious Digital Salon to date — an international survey of New Media art devoted to the works of digital art pioneers and contemporary masters.

The exhibition took place at the Courtland Gallery of the World Financial Center, located next door to Ground Zero. Using the all-American 'top ten' formula in his curatorial approach, Digital Salon director Bruce Wands invited ten leading curators from major art institutions worldwide asking them to nominate ten pieces. The exhibition turned out to be a parity attempt of covering too wide an area in too broad a stroke, resulting in a messy jungle of online projects, installations, music and video works. The disappointment doubled when the

exhibition only contained 30 works after publicizing a list of over 100 artists. The remaining works were to be seen online or read about in the catalogue.

Despite an obvious effort to deal with audio art and electronic music (only included for the first time last year), little effort was made to soundproof the space, creating a severe sound bleed between installations. The least successful of all was a 'sound art' room, a small area with several seats, a monitor and speakers. Playing a CD on rotation, the selected works included Claude Le Prado's *Le Triangle* (Incarcerate), Daniel Tamayo's *Fighters You*, and Oval's *Ovalversus 2000*, but Tamayo's plastic sheets installed to isolate the sound made it impossible to actually distinguish one piece from another.

Of all the audio works only Carsten Nicolai's

Telefunkin, a minimalist three screen installation led by an audio signal loading an array of white noise patterns onto the screens, and Bertrand Lavier's *Head Spaces*, stood a chance of being heard and seen without any major obstacles. *Head Spaces*, being a virtual three-dimensional scalarpal work designed especially for headphones, aimed at massaging the interior space of the head, actually provided a welcome chance to plug out of the aural and visual dinocracy around. The over ambitious curatorial policy coupled with an inappropriate space (and obvious budgetary constraints) combined to make *Vectors* a timid and inadequately presented exhibition, only saved by a through catalogue in the form of a special issue of the Leonardo Journal. □

Go To:



For anyone left hungry for more after reading our Soft Machine Primer (see page 48) *Canterbury Music Family Tree* (www.canterburymusicfamilytree.com/) offers an extremely useful breakdown of who did what when that convoluted lineage. Finding out how Whitesnake may or may not be related in a roundabout way to Gong, is half the fun here, while taking in Campbelts, Matching Mole, Henry Cow and Egg along the way but beware: the Family Tree resembles a medical chart.

Those intrigued by the three day, 21 hour, 38 minute, three second *Farmers Market* DVD containing pretty much every live recording they ever did from 1985 to now (reviewed on page 60), can try before you buy their *Recent Live Archive* (tms.ws/tm/) contains the whole lot — download at your leisure, gratis and for nothing.

The temple of industrial and experimental output, *Branwashed* (www.branwashed.com/), has added another element to their already sprawling site. Besides weekly album reviews, The Bran new also hosts The Eye, a weekly video feature on an artist with live clips and words from the artists themselves, starting with Ernst Beukouen of RHFearless. Beukouen resides in Lowell, Massachusetts and "has been titled America's Greatest Living Noise Artist" (by

whom, we wonder?). Upcoming features include The Dirty Three, The Sea And Ca, The Newset, Brokbeck, Calfone, Thalia Zedos, and Co. *Guitarist Hans Relschew* (www.daxo.de/), inventor of the legendary diaphone and regular presence on the German *Improv* label FMR has a playful online presence. Check full of interactive games and short animations, his homepage contains plenty of information about his compositions and design, as well as images and archive samples from his many invented guitars.

Blagging is the new blabbing. Or so it seems with at least two Web contrarians this month. Since Reynolds' *Bisous* (bisous.blogspot.com/) is a stably music related affair, with Reynolds in meteorologist mode. With one finger in the air to feel which way the wind's blowing, he is currently updating a 'Stacks And Shakes Index Of Influences For Rock Bands' which he originally scribbled for the now defunct *Lizard* magazine in 1994. At the time he categorized groups in sections such as "Pissed" (Gang Of Four), "Hot..." For New (Can), "Wee Wee" (Incredible String Band), and "Beyond The Pale Of Rehabilitation" (ie, Menomen, GTF), and so on. He's now asking for outside suggestions to update this Index. Ian Penman's *Pillbox*

(www.pillbox.blogspirit.com/) is a far more personal and garrily off-kilter. Subtitled "A Catalog Of Culture & Banality" (from the touring reproduction quote), "There is no document of culture that is not one of banality as well" — W. Benjamin, the good Penman, also opening as "Pebby", offers his observations on The Byrds, Borges's cat (and his own troupe of felines, which he describes glibly in his garden), Bush and AFP (American Foreign Policy) in general, Pashley quotes, plus a handful of other topics and learned and whimsical asides. Well worth a daily visit.

TWANSDC (www.hollowearth.org/~blog.html) is another blog, updated daily, somehow stretching No Wave, La Monte Young and Steve Reich. The related site *Hollowearth* (www.hollowearth.org/), an illustration and animation site, contains two treats in the section devoted to music: "Luminarchs", a UK post-punk MP3 compilation featuring such luminaries as Valerie Goldstein, General Strike, This Heat, P-L and Sonti Politz; while "Vintage Andriote" (*Do You Know The Score?*) is another dead straighter rough-edged breakbeat cuts by Diliria, Nookie, Bodynatch, and A Guy Called Gerald. Now that's what I call nostalgia.

ANNE HILDE NESET

On Location

Live and kicking: festivals, concerts, events in the flesh



ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES UK
CAMBER SANDS HOLIDAY CENTRE

BY JOHN MILROY

After three days at All Tomorrow's Parties, it's easy to take the magnificent strangeness of the weekend's endeavour for granted. Only occasionally with a jolt of pleasure, are you reminded how the extreme has been normalised within this weatherbeaten old English holiday camp. Maybe it's 20 minutes into Bernard Parmegiani's *De Natura Sonorum*, when one of the technical crew emerges to distract the attention of the audience, who have been patiently engrossed watching an empty stage.

Parmegiani is, in fact, operating the mixing desk, transforming his electroacoustic suite into a spacious architectural piece, building sound clusters in the corners of the room while his notable fellow performers — Jim O'Rourke, Peter Reckell, Curtis Roads — look on admiringly. It is the third evening of the festival, punctuated by a series of performances here in a year of repetition. From freezing naps to digital improvisation, a good many paragraphs appear obsessed by the notion that art is at its most powerful when it is unpredictable. There are exceptions, of course — Parmegiani's rigorous composition and The Magic Bands' scrupulous revelation are two key examples — but still, this music which synthesises the spontaneous and unpredictable even when it is inextricably planned.

The Fall, of course, always give that impression, no matter what line-up Mark E. Smith chooses to torment. The air of segmented psychoses, of going through the non-conformist motions, is pleasingly strong here. The sound is spindly, rudimentary and soulful, with Smith persistently choosing a set of dots closest to his commercial heyday in the mid-80s. So the diehard purists of 'new New Wave' is initiated once again, alongside an abstained, sort of lunatic 'Telephone Thing' and a rare reiteration of 'I Am Domo Suzuki' that trips blithely down drum 'Yah'. Well, after a lathorn.

Public Enemy, too, present something of a greatest hits set, but it's mercifully free from the cabaret presentation some had feared. The critical elements of chaos have been rediscovered, even though Chuck D, Flavor Flav

Roads, in the manic skipping music of Yasumasa Terao, in the belligerent swarms of Rosen Hecker.

It would be easy to hear the pervading sound of the festival as a kind of polyestral electronics, especially given the presence of Hecker and a platoon of his fellow Megafauna artists. Pita also Peter Reckell begins Saturday afternoon's set with a characteristic, multi-textured roar of laptop noise that patiently and gradually resolves itself into a looming melody. Farmers Mansel, meanwhile, epitomise the positive/aggressive nature of improvised electronic: fair men absorbed by their laptops, fixated with the power of tiny adjustments, triggering a sequence of impulsive downhounds, more like chess players than collaborators.

But Autecine are too clever, too slippery, for their All Tomorrow's Parties to be quite so predictable. From Friday evening onwards, it's apparent that the dominant impulse shared by a vast majority of the performers here is a fear of repetition. From freezing naps to digital improvisation, a good many paragraphs appear obsessed by the notion that art is at its most powerful when it is unpredictable. There are exceptions, of course — Parmegiani's rigorous composition and The Magic Bands' scrupulous revelation are two key examples — but still, this music which synthesises the spontaneous and unpredictable even when it is inextricably planned.

The Fall, of course, always give that impression, no matter what line-up Mark E. Smith chooses to torment. The air of segmented psychoses, of going through the non-conformist motions, is pleasingly strong here. The sound is spindly, rudimentary and soulful, with Smith persistently choosing a set of dots closest to his commercial heyday in the mid-80s. So the diehard purists of 'new New Wave' is initiated once again, alongside an abstained, sort of lunatic 'Telephone Thing' and a rare reiteration of 'I Am Domo Suzuki' that trips blithely down drum 'Yah'. Well, after a lathorn. Public Enemy, too, present something of a greatest hits set, but it's mercifully free from the cabaret presentation some had feared. The critical elements of chaos have been rediscovered, even though Chuck D, Flavor Flav

and Professor Griff are now backed by a muscular live group as well as the excellent DJ Lord (filling in for Terminator X in semi-retirement on his estate Henry). Steep PE, behind about the stage by "Bring The Noise" or "Rebel Without A Cause" is a reminder that their power always derived from the unassuming nature of their sound as much as their diabolical faces. The latter is still potent, with Chuck D deresenting the war even as one of his entourage peddles next to him with a dog-eared sign proclaiming, "T-Shirts \$10". It's a long, uneven show, but at its best it's outstanding. And at its worst, it's compellingly weird. Reverend X's extended drum solo, Professor Griff's droning "Whole Lotta Love" as his sole Metal showcase... For this weekend at least, the ancient claims of PE being the best rock 'n' roll group in the world seem curiously accurate.

Autecine's reputation as diehard 8-boys attests that Hippeas provide human engagement throughout the weekend. Brooklyn's persistent obscurant Howl (II) and his crew are AMP's most endearing and bewildest visitors. Viewing Britain through a prism while they try to work out where they are, they go on to reveal their tight hoses with the likes of "I Still Live With My Mom". EHF is as fierce and articulate as ever, and his juxtapositions of the personal, political and fantastical, notably in the remarkable "Stepfather Daydream", confirm him in this context as a last of spiritual her to Chuck D. But Koal Keith is the weekend's biggest disappointment. Not only is he lascivious and monotonous, he's also hindered by some rotten self-promotion, by his producer/DJ Kutmasta Keith.

Exactly where Sunn O))) fit in is harder to say. They have been resurrected with a spot early on Sunday morning between unusually execrable sets from Russell Haswell and The Apache Twin, the latter finding off his wort gibbo instincts until the final stages of his DJ set. Sunn O)))'s fittingly, intent the slot originally given to them mentors Earth, who pulled out at the last moment (apparently they forgot they needed passports to leave America). Their neoclassic doomsdrone has the rare gift of being both transparent and preposterous. Dressed in ethnic robes and

illuminated by flickering candles, Greg Anderson and Stephen O'Malley carve great slow motion arcs with their guitars, and an anonymous vocalist (not Avian Cope, as has been widely reported) in Nordic Metal facepaint knees down, shoves two mics into his mouth and lets out a giant rotevoicing "Om". It's one of the weekend's highlights.

The other, perhaps, is Jim O'Rourke's set on Sunday afternoon. Beginning as a family splintered laptop workout, it progresses through a compressed digest of avant-garde tropes before focusing on a beautiful oscillating drone which gently manipulates for some 20 minutes. It's a relief, perhaps, to finally find glock music finding a resolution of sorts in a festival venue — save the warm MicroHouse of sed and a few Techne DJ sets — the music has been characterised by a sense of restlessness.

Hence the return of The Magic Band on Sunday night, famously without Captain Beakheart. It all feels a little like an exercise in bogus authenticity. After all, these the musicians never actually played together, and while John "Drumbo" French undeniably looks like Beakheart, it's ambiguous whether The Magic Band's drumming during impressions is any more valid than a total newcomer singing the songs. Two thirds of the way through their nonetheless endearing set, the fire alarm sounds and the building is evacuated. It turns out to be a false alarm. Perhaps it was Beakheart getting his own back. When everyone returns, they're more relaxed, and French's bark through "Big Eye Beans From Venus" makes a fitting conclusion to this most contentious and rewarding of festivals.

Like so much else here, it's an exploration of music where rigid enforced parameters — as if tied to a beatbox — artists must stay true to fundamental dictums about how they should sound. Like freedom necessarily comes from self-restriction. We're reminded, too, of Sonic Youth's set three years ago, when their SY style impersonations were boozed by a crowd expecting something like a greatest hits show. It wouldn't happen now. As the musical possibilities of All Tomorrow's Parties have expanded, so have the perspectives of their audience. An adventure playground for Mine readers, no less. □

All tomorrow's party people. Top: The Magic Band. Middle row left to right: EHF; Sunn O))), Mark E. Smith. Bottom row from left: Professor Griff, The Apache Twin

SONIC YOUTH: STAN BRAKHAGE MEMORIAL BENEFIT
NEW YORK ANTHROLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
USA

BY MARC MASTERS

From the moment until his death from cancer in March, Stan Brakhage was arguably America's greatest living visual artist. If we could agree with that claim, maybe it's most likely because Brakhage chose motion pictures as the medium for his eye massage. His pulsing body of nearly 400 films, ranging from Cocteau-like dream-narratives to home movie autoecologies and hand-painted films like *Pollock At 100 Miles Per Hour*, recasts the viewer's vision by feeding it imagery dislodged from meaning and context. While Brakhage found sound distracting and kept most of his movies silent, his pupil-drilling light poems

have a vibrating rhythm that all but begs for musical response.

One recent answer is Lee Ranaldo's *Test Of Light*, a retelling group of improvisations including William Hooker, Alan Licht and Christian Marclay who assemble an sprawling live soundtrack to Brakhage's reprinted study *Test Of Light* (1974). And tonight Ranaldo's own square Sonic Youth did the same to serve shorter Brakhage films at NYC's Anthology Film Archives, with proceeds defraying Brakhage's outstanding medical expenses. Anthology founder James Melos introduced the group by reciting Brakhage's response to a doctor who encouraged the film maker to medically locate and destroy his cancer cells: "I found them, and I feed them. But I couldn't kill them," Brakhage said. "They were so beautiful."

That humbling sentiment rippled through Sonic Youth's performance, generating a wide

audience's thought cast that slowly demobilised both its witnesses and creators. Silhouetted against the screen like Screamers cave shadows, the group — joined by second drummer Tim Barnes, who also participated in Test Of Light's recent European tour — began cautiously, setting a tentative metronomic waltz that appeared to be intimidated by the towering imagery. But eventually they tossed a variety of avant-garde of the film's "threshold" visual series. The spookily transfixing of falling percussion entries, spinal guitar chimes and muted amp roars pitched a musical tent only a few canopies away from the haunted forest of the group's 80s classics *Eve! and Siste!*

Then river of ideas flowed upstream from there, carrying a tumultuous wave of peaks. The group was nuclear-reactive to The Wunder Ring (1965), Brakhage's riotous document of the NYC's new demolished Third Avenue El train,

bathing the accelerating footage in a crackling, wavy din. The seismatic part of Brakhage's most famous epic, *Dog Star Man* (1960), provided a jagged response, as the film's retina-ripping glimpses of a lengthened Brakhage and a naked-face baby were split apart by Randolph's guitar, barnets and Barnes's and Steve Shelleys' head-first drumkit coverage, while Thurston Moore hollered his strings into needles and drove a boomerang through a morined hall of talk radio stations. The finale, *Cats Cradle* (1959), an epileptic inducing storm of images — avant-garde film critic P. Adams Sitney counted more than 700 shots in its five minutes — showed the right's sensory axes to a face-blushing bell. Through Sonic Youth's considers choices split beyond the end of the film, the image of a frozen Moon, hypnotised by the furious flashes of Brakhage's gaze, remained buried into the retina long after ears stopped ringing. □

On Location

ARCHIPEL

GENEVA VARIOUS VENUES

BY RAHMA KHANZAM

Many music festivals are content to line up a string of names relating to a given theme. Less common are events that yield fresh insights into current trends, juxtapose different genres or introduce newcomers alongside established artists. The Archipel Festival's 12th edition did all of that, pulling together composers and performers from acoustic music and minimalism to improv and sound art in a demanding and innovative programme.

In the evenings devoted to minimalism, for instance, the programmes turned their backs on big guns like Philip Glass and Steve Reich, focusing instead on four of its more vigorous practitioners – James Tenney, Tom Johnson, Philip Niblock and Alvin Lucier. Among the high points was one of Johnson's most exacting pieces, *The Chord Catalogue*, played by the composer himself. The *Chord Catalogue* requires the performer to play all the two-note chords in the octave, followed by all the three-note chords and so on up to 13 – amounting to a grand total of 8178 chords. The giddy clouds of overtones winding down throughout Johnson's

performance transformed this eminently rational work into a transcendental experience.

Equally spellbinding were the two works by Alvin Lucier staged later the same evening. In the presence of Alvin's New York virtuous laureate Carla Levina, played long flute tones against waves of sound produced by oscillators, creating weird phantom beasts. In the following, *Small Waves*, microphones inserted into six partially filled water containers triggered strands of feedback that sounded at frequencies determined by the size and shape of the vessels. Their acoustic properties were further modifed by two performers pouring the contents of one vessel into another. Meanwhile, a string quartet, a trombone and a pianist tuned to the feedback to create interference patterns. Together with the slow rhythmic movements of two large water pieces dressed in black, the creamy sounds issuing from the stage transported the formal performance into a supernatural ceremony.

The acoustic music programme contrasted the work of François Bayle, former head of the Groupe de Recherches Musicales in Paris and a pillar of the electroacoustic establishment, with that of younger composers operating outside the GRM's orbit. Bayle presented a selection of

solo spanning his lengthy career, teeming with ripples, squeaks and expressive gurgles; his expansive soundscapes can initially appear fussy; but given attention, every sound takes on a life and meaning of its own. The concert included his homage to Robert Wyatt called "It", resounding one of the most fascinating pieces from the early part of his career. Incorporating disconcertingly loud hums and buzzes, "It" was an unexpectedly savage deconstruction of a vocal improvisation by Wyatt. An enthralled rock fan, Bayle had captured this off the cuff performance during a Soft Machine show in Paris at the end of the 80s. The evening devoted to younger artists provided a rare opportunity to hear the work of three women composers – with hit and miss results. Michèle Bokalewski's hand-tuned treatment of a woman's voice in "Eté des Aléas" bordered on the oppressive. By contrast, former Jony Harris student Natasha Barrett's finely detailed "Little Animals" worked a host of evocative animal-like sounds through some subtle transformations.

Archipel also devoted space to the expanding art of sound installation. Pieces by leading Berlin-based sound artist Röbe Meier and newcomer Rudy Decleire posed perceptual

puzzles in Nined's "Sound Bits", crackles and buzzes emanating from small flower-like speakers embedded in a screen described circles, lines and waves as they moved from speaker to speaker but the sounds didn't impress so much as the subtle and intriguing visual illusions created by their movements. Decleire's "Mille Notes Sun Ture" consisted of 1000 or so plant-like speakers arranged in neat rows on a grassy slope in the outskirts of Geneva. Here, environmental sounds – birds chirping in a nearby wood, planes passing overhead, etc – merged with the whooshes, whirs and imperceptible hums issuing from the speakers to suggest effect.

It fell to Günter Müller, Toku Sugimoto and John Tilbury to take sound to its logical extreme: silence. Although this was their first piece as a trio, they gave a masterly performance. Gradually, the energetic notes from Sugimoto's guitar found their place beside Tilbury's judiciously placed piano tones and Müller's muted electronics. And the ever deepening swathes of silence, the trio's sparse interjections hovered tantalisingly in the air, before receding back into silence. Like much else at Archipel, it was a riveting and intense experience. □

X-TRACT SCULPTURE MUSICALE: DIALOGUES BETWEEN MUSIC AND ART

BERLIN PODERWIL

GERMANY

BY EDWARD

It sounded like a good idea. After all, the edges of both art and music have frequently found common ground, and are still doing so, so why not a chance to expose this a bit? And Poderwil, Berlin's threatened haven for the avant-garde, is a great place to do it: a fine auditorium with good sound and plenty of small rooms in which to stick some installations.

Even given that experimental music and art is just that – experimental – and that experiments can fail or not prove what was hoped for, this series was a disappointment. The installations give a hint of what was to come: Kavafis's dull One Million Years (Past and Future) consisted of him reading numbers; Charlemagne Palestine's video of him twirling a cord with a light bulb on the end and a dove played: Hidegad.

Westerkamp's Sovetskaia Garda, a pleasant enough New Age soundscape, Red Langberg's rather cool Kinetische Abgangskunst Rollen, which drops balls tied to a cord onto metal surfaces situated around the room at a more or less random fashion, and, in the foyer, Chieji Nijimura and Art Detroy's An Act of Intensity, a dual video of guys putting up whirrings on a soft flat. One out of five, I figured.

And, it must be admitted, the festival got off to a good start with David Toop and Max Eastley's Skin Forces, in which the two played off each other, Toop with various flutes and small noisemakers, Eastley with a huge bow hooked up to some precessors that made some impressive

sounds, and, later, activating little wooden balls on fishing line which brushed against some sculptures on stage. The whole thing was quiet, and, after a while, involving, although in darkness. It went on too long: this may have been due to the cancellation of John Will, who was scheduled to present two pieces. The evening's closer, Test Of Light, was bound by the length of the film of the same name, by the late Stan Brakhage, with which they improvised. Test Of Light, the group, is a bit of a supergroup, with Lee Ranaldo and Alan Vega on guitars, DJ Olive on turntables and Tim Barnes on drums, joined by Ulrich Kruger on whatever appeared to be some people's dream instrument, a free jazz tenor sax that made no sound at all. The film, from 1974, was pretty abstract and mostly dark. The group made a point of not interacting with it, which is fine, I suppose, but after 45 minutes, it seemed to me that neither the film nor the group was going anywhere, but I could, and did.

Thursday was billed as "The Long Night Of X-tract", and boy, was it ever. I missed the opening speech by Peter Kofek and Charlemagne Palestine, remembering the latter's from the first evening, which mostly consisted of him whining about history and then jumping up and down rhythmically and chanting "Take advantage of now!" But long nights should at least start on time, and the audience was plausibly around the auditorium door for over half an hour before we were allowed in. First up was Joseph Kubera, from Koskia SEM Ensemble, playing Still Lives, eight pieces for saxes and piano by Alvin Lucier from 1996, but hoarkening back to a much earlier era. Desires titles like "Lambo Shade" and "Barbecue Girl", they were pretty much indistinguishable from each other, very

slow, with occasional fissures of beats when the saxes and the piano notes met. Then, the rest of the ensemble came out for Michel Duchamp's The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Beauhairs, Event: Erotism Musical, a 1974 realisation by Kofek, but of what I have no idea. Erotism Musical was a game Duchamp made up where very short musical events were written on cards, which were dealt out to his sisters, who performed what they got. Kotik's Bassid was a long, tedious, pantomime thing that recalled the world of academic composition. This segment of the long night, though, ended with a resounding success: Duchamp's Sculpture Musicale, from 1913, in which a number of musical toys, girls' jewellery boxes, stuffed animals and the like were all wound up and placed, unrolled, on a table and allowed to go until they ran down. Someone in the back of the hall let off three blasts on an air-horn. Ah! This was Duchamp, for sure. Bobo had it right about the minutes.

After the break, Charlemagne Palestine treated us to "beerebaapakoo", a drome created from several CDs, while a photo of a couple of stuffed animals behind the desk. Then Kofek came back with John Cage's *Rituals*, which, with its beauty flute and tremolo tones, sounded like nothing more than cool Japanese music. Another break, and then on came Porter Ricks. Beatles' Ringo soundscapes interspersed with jingles, barking barks and white video, we were over four hours in and my backache was sore, so I left, missing the last half of Porter Ricks, not to mention SEM's interpretation of a La Monte Young piece.

After that, it was off to great enthusiasm that I pulled myself back on the Subway for a slow

DJ Spooky. The program opened with the worst act so far, Gero Elixio, from Portugal, consisting of a man and a woman playing harmonium and a third guy sitting at a desk controlling a recording of footfalls walking in and out. The audience really got into this, providing their own footfalls as they walked in and out. But then came Reinhold Friedl with a neo-Bachstein, a 1929 electric grand piano on which he delivered excellent versions of Henry Cowell's *The Banshee* and Arslan Karp, as well as a lovely improvisation of his own which used feedback to great effect. I could care if his banjo didn't sound like the composer's recording I remember from childhood, but I really enjoyed it. And then, dammit, Spooky saved the day. His performance was announced as a Duchamp remix, and it was. He took the idea of the *Erotism Musical*, applied it each to visual on his laptop which were projected behind him and to his handling of various musical elements and excerpts from Duchamp's 1957 lecture "The Creative Act", and made the house (intellectually speaking) for nearly an hour the manipulation and the visual brought together the stated theme of the concert series in a way no one else had done, and as a result I promise to get DJ Spooky a whole lot more slack the next time I'm in his audience.

I'll continue to eat Poderwil stock, too, the poor success-failure ratio of this series was unusual, although I would urge the tech crew to go to a rock festival soon and check out how soundchecks are done earlier in the day and equipment is placed so that it is easily changed. And I look forward to the series – I never thought I'd be coming up – that has as many hits as this had misses. □



Wire on the stage sets for their performances of Pink Flag (top right) and Send (bottom). Top left: Interval noise with Jake & Dinos Chapman and Project Dark

WIRE: FLAG: BURNING LONDON BARBICAN

BY MIKE BARNES

For this appearance at the Barbican, Wire were obliged to come up with something more than just a gig to fulfil the Only Connect festival's strapline promise of "a series of extraordinary events" — both as individuals and in various collaborations, the group's members are no strangers to mixed media work, but a few notorious nights notwithstanding — like the pair of performance art augmented performances in 1979–80 that spawned the *Document And Eyewitness* album — they have mostly played it relatively straight when they have gone out as Wire. Not unusually, their chosen collaboration had no previous experience working with rock groups: theorin, film and open designer Es Devlin, and artist brothers Jake and Dinos Chapmans.

The concert programmed back-to-back performances of their 1977 debut, *Pink Flag*, and their latest album, *Send*, separated by an interval in which the Chapman brothers and Weston Reynolds of Project Dark effected a 20-minute live remix of Wire tracks. The albums

themselves might be 26 years apart, but critics have been lauding the superbly drilled rock of *Send* to *Pink Flag*, at least in terms of their shared intensity and concentrated rock clout. To justify that, Only Connect tag, their *Pink Flag* and *Send* stage sets were designed by the Chapman brothers and Es Devlin, respectively.

Pink Flag might bear some of 1977's punk hallmarks but in its 2003 performance, it sounded surprisingly contemporary. Maybe it's the way they played it. Guitarist Bruce Gilbert has said that rehearsing the songs of *Pink Flag* was like *Pt. II*. And on the album, Wire do indeed sound like they're just about keeping up. With age comes proficiency, however. Where many of their punk contemporaries mellowed, burnt out or faded away, Wire now play *Pink Flag* songs with more bite and, if anything, more speed than before. At the Barbican, "Surgeon's Gift" clocked in at about 45 seconds, shoving a good 15 seconds from the group's previous personal best.

Although *Pink Flag* was heavily fixed on its 1977 release, Wire's energy commitment to putting an album behind them as soon as it was released means it never became a milestone around their neck. Returning to it in 2003, then,

they felt no great need either to demystify it or lay it to rest. Wire cracked up its inherently abrasive and absurd qualities. Talking of *Pt. II*, the Chapman brothers must have been listening in when Gilbert dragged that quote, for they took it as their cue for *Pink Flag*'s stage set, which consisted of projecting videos through junkies grunting incoherently into the camera as they ran through their synchronised step aerobics routines. Some sort of the jolt soon wore thin, but the sheer restlessness of the visual theme was half the point. Once the clips started repeating as the set progressed, however, the Chapman's effort started to look a little half-hearted. For all its aloofness, *Pink Flag* is also chocfull of lop-sided humour, and the way Newman stopped "Brazil" dead with "I'm going to let the bright light go bright" ("bright/bright/bright/bright/bright/bright") cracked me up.

Since *Wire* had played the album through, original pauses and all, a group of pink-trot-suited men and women joined the group for the first set finale, exercising along to a reworked version of *Pink Flag*'s title track.

Es Devlin's stage set for the second half's

performance of *Send* was a visually stunning construction, quite unlike anything seen before on a rock stage. When the lights came up, each *Wire* member was sealed within their own room-sized box, erected side by side. These were individually lit, with images back-projected onto a screen veiling the four hatchets. Starting with muted lighting and a projected feature, signs of musical activity were regressed in dramatic oscilloscope readouts and heart rate data over projections of dancing sperm and breast cells. In line with the biological theme, Newman's "room" was later decorated with an enormous video image of his mouth that was lip-synched to his live vocals, while eyes and other facial details were projected on to the other members' units. Deafar's vision was a perfect match for Send's clavichordistic, visceral music, which played with foursome intensity.

Send live highlighted the differences between *Wire* then and now in contrast to *Pink Flag*'s 21-tonne, angular cameras. Send's songs accumulate intensity through repetition over time. Their short, sharp set concluded with *Wire* one by one unfurling the black wall fabric of their cells and walking away. □

On Location

FREEDOM OF THE CITY 2003

LONDON CONWAY HALL

BY BRIAN MARLEY

Freedom of the City is an annual showcase for improvisers and performers of musical ecstacy. Through most participants are UK based, there's always a strong international contingent. This year, in a bid to bring greater coherence to the programme, the festival has shrunk slightly; six concerts played during three afternoons/evening sessions. What's interesting about Freedom Of The City is that analyses of the performances by musicians and audience alike are often forensically detailed, and what's causing consternation this year is reductionism.

Interviewed in *The Wire* 231, Eddie Prevost damned the tendency of reductionists, thinking audiences found it in "a writer's facile, doomy religiosity". Yet here he is, as a member of Martin's group Sakada, comfortably playing alongside Mark Washit, the key figure in the homegrown brand of reductionism that is New London Silence. Go figure.

FREEDOM OF THE CITY: LONDON IMPROVISERS ORCHESTRA

LONDON CONWAY HALL

UK

BY RICHARD WOLFSON

The London Improvisers Orchestra took over Holborn's Conway Hall on the hottest day of the year for one of their periodic assaults at resolving the contradiction that a conductor, inspired by veteran Mexican flutist Momo, condonation is a confutation of conducting and improvisation where a composer/conductor figure directs an ensemble of improvisers with written instructions, hand movements – anything except an actual noted some Regardless, something combustible must surely happen in an event bringing together the likes of soprano Lol Cadiel, drummer Louis Moholo and pianist Verjan

GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR + JACKIE O MOTHERFUCKER QUEBEC ST ROCH CHURCH/MONTREAL RIALTO THEATER CANADA

BY BRUNO COLEY

The vibes couldn't have been weird. In the midst of the Second Bush War, there was something very disconcerting about sitting in a vast, drab church in Quebec City's old quartier, watching local parishioners try to figure out who they should be complaining to about the hordes of hairy miscreants clambering around setting things up. This small group of tight-assed thinkips approached just about everyone mulling around the back of the church in hope of finding someone who would take responsibility for this mess. But neither the Godspeed You! Black Emperor nor the Jackie O Motherfucker organisations are hierarchical, so the poor bastards ended up leaving without even being able to yell at anyone. Too bad for them. They should have stayed, I mean, they'd

I suspect that Martin really couldn't care less about musical definitions, and Sakada's music seems calculated to thwart expectations rather than bolster them. Martin's [computer feedback], *Preface* (percussion) and *Wasted* (prepared textures) are joined by Rhoda Davies (harp) and Margarita Garcia (electric double bass). Cut-and-thrust call and response is notably absent, and technique is abandoned. The careful selection and placement of sounds in the music are what matter most. Sonic events occur simultaneously, or overlap, and in the process the music thickens and thins and accumulates complexity. Within a few minutes, the players are all using bows to draw sounds from their instruments. Martin bows his laptop's screen casing. After 30 minutes of tense, tempest, slow moving music, the piece appears to have reached a natural conclusion, and the players freeze in static tableau. A long silence ensues. Davies then draws a hissy snap from the strings of his harp, like a slow exhalation of breath, and the group embarks on the first of several brief, retentive codas.

The festival's most anticipated event is the performance by pianist John Tilbury and sitbop guitarist Keith Rowe. Despite their long relationship in AMM, until recently they had never played in duo. And their first duo performance is set to happen tonight. How dispassionate, then, that they invite AMM colleague Eddie Prevost to sit in with them. Of course, it's a committed and satisfying performance, as AMM elements almost inevitably are, but two things make this one out its beauty – it ends after roughly 30 minutes, the point at which AMM are usually just getting into their stride – and the concentrated energy that AMM unleash. Tilbury's pounding, jazzy, dissident chords, with which the set begins, bring the music instantly alive to all manner of possibilities, and the duo successfully pursue a number of them within the limited timespan. In the last few minutes, as if to honour the original intention, Prevost stops playing and sits back, eyes closed, elegantly embracing the interplay between Rowe and Tilbury.

For the closing set, Prevost leaves his barrel drum, drumming snare, gong and hand-held

cymbals on the main stage and moves to a small podium where a regular drum set has been set up. This change of tools signals a shift in emphasis. As their acronym suggests, the FJO are a free jazz quartet, the other members being Henning Smith (saxophones, bass clarinet), Paul Rutherford (trombone) and, standing in for an indisposed Tony Moore, Marco Montes (cello). FJO's only album *Premonitions* (1999), still accurately represents the group's music.

Afterwards, someone described the set as "the history lesson". FJO's music doesn't stem directly from the black music tradition of Albert Ayler and John Coltrane. Ecstatic blowouts are avoided, as is any distinction between the frontline instruments and the rhythm section. This is a music played by equals. Each of their four pieces is lean and sly, with tightly woven counterpoint from Smith and Rutherford. But inexplicably, for much of the set, the music fails to ignite. □

Free citizens (clockwise from top left):
John Tilbury, Rhoda Davies, Margarita Garcia,
Molin (with laptop) and Mark Washit

Weston; anarchic performance oriented peripatetic like composer and sit-saxophonist Caroline Knobell and mayhem maker Steve Beresford, and the X factors of Keith Rowe and Pat Thomas on guitars and electronics.

Opening proceedings, Pat Thomas set up a flailing post-beat benth, with three drummers and three double bassists drumming all over each other, while huge, honking and swooshing noises erupted from the reared ranks of horns and strings. Caroline Knobell introduced Outsidetalkin' Jaap Blonk, who peeped out from behind a curtain of cello and double bass, his peepholes revealing cell and response passages where small instrumental units within the UJO's ranks imitated Blonk's whoops and blurs. Roland Renssen hit upon the perfect way to close this first half by compelling musicians from the stage one at a time to leave Lol Cadiel all alone with his soprano sax. After three minutes of excitable soloing, he

finally muttered, "Can I go now, please?"

In contrast with the chopping and changing textures that characterised many of the conductors, Kurt Autemann took a different conceptual approach by setting in train a swelling chordal mass that imperceptibly grew into a giant crescendo. Over the densities, however, the orchestra's tendency to produce similar textures and sonorities in response to various directions exposed the potential flaw at the heart of the conductor process: hand gestures are a frustratingly imprecise way of controlling large ensemble improvisations. One gesture might cue a blast from the horn section; another might send the violins and cellos into an orgasmic frenzy, and yet another could set off drums or panos – and then what? Escaping from conductor's rather too predictable formulas wasn't proving so easy, but Steve

Beresford had a good try by directing a countertenor guitar concerto from Keith Rowe. Well, most of an anti-concerto solo! Rowe's low frequency drones and elongated textures challenged the orchestra to come up with something different. Executing these pieces, control over the orchestra's rambles, Dave Licker and Philip Webström sang off snarl, tight units to extract some extremely subtle sonorities.

But do musicians really respond well to someone pointing at them and instructing them to make a sound? The one passage where the orchestra got to improvise with no directions to guide them was interesting precisely because every now and then something unique and magical emerged out of their chaotic jamming. By definition, any attempt at directing such spontaneous flourishes would have automatically destroyed them. □

gattan in free alrady, right?

Right. The same could not be said of Jackie O's founder, Vern Greenwood, who had been deported back across the border into the US two days before on the strength of his juvenile arrest record. Rumour had it this was a Canadian Old-Far-Far response to local cops and the FBI had Godspeed for looking "suspicious" while returning their tour van. It's a great time to be a hawkish, eh?

Well, 1,300 people thought so in Québec City. The church was packed with a Québec City that might be best described, sarcastically, as "folklagers and the girls who love them". And they were pretty well pleased with Jackie O, who substituted Fluffy Enskar's song for the usually Greenwood's guitar. Their all-new line-up, including Samanta Ionni Hall Of Fame, produced a line of gorgeous dirge events that shivered through the church's lignesque like a silver cloud. It was nice.

In contrast, Godspeed tonight sounded extremely hard-edged and Piggy. The tunes were played at a fairly slow pace, and the effects,

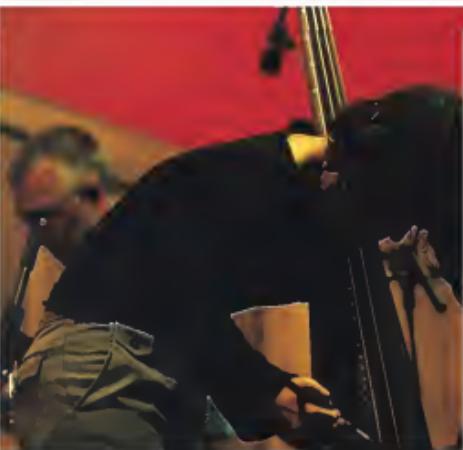
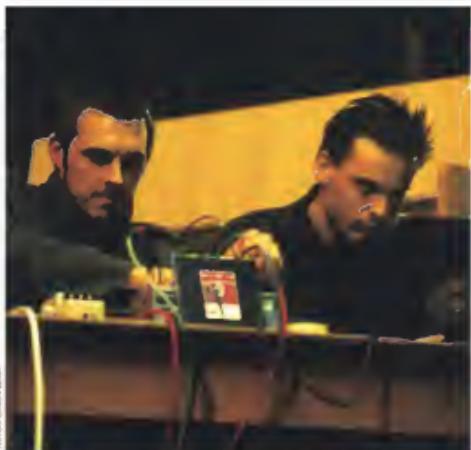
floofiness and weird dynamics combined to create something not unlike Red-Ada Cresson, if the way the music expanded in several unexpected dimensions. Personally, it struck me as a little overly rocket, especially in light of Godspeed's initially anti-formous, but the music combining with their projections and the strange ambience of the church was pretty pleasant. Much more pleasant, however, was the ambience of Montreal's Rialto the next night. Unlike the church, this place had a bar (which was good) and condoned smoking (which was great). Recently renovated, the Rialto reminded me of a somewhat better preserved version of the rock venues of my youth. The setting and a far more post-punk crowd made the Montreal night right different.

Although they produced some moments of pure joy, Jackie O's anti-rock procedural stance was somewhat at odds with the place. Their "grooves" are so ethereal, their approach so abstract, that their results are always wildly variant in Montreal they only coexisted in short bursts, but everyone was so deep into their beats and clogs that they didn't seem to mind.

Godspeed, however, was brilliant, better than I could have imagined. Though they hate playing their home town, tonight the spectators really worked with the music and the group were fully jacked. They played twice as fast, twice as loud as they had in Québec City, ramping things up to a Hawkeye intensity that really sounded amazing.

At this speed and intensity, the way their sonics combined with the visuals – a darkly animate collage about the politics of revenge and the emotion of the human spirit – was incredibly powerful. And when the two groups joined forces for an epic piece, as they did on both nights, some kind of inexplicable post-core hippy gas was released that just made everyone smile. Even the creeps looking madly around, guys who were lurking around obviously hoping to make some sorta profit for something. In the event they were as incapable of cracking the code of hierarchy behind this North American underground summit, as those lost churchgoers back in Québec City.

Here's a due. Honorable action, I guess that's what it's all about. Always. □





beb el gilberto

Saturday 19th July 2003

**BRIDgewater HALL
MANCHESTER**

Tel: 0161 907 9000

Tuesday 22nd July 2003

**SHEPHERDS BUSH
EMPIRE LONDON**

Tel: 0870 771 2000

Wednesday 30th July 2003

CARLING ACADEMY BRISTOL

Tel: 0870 771 2000

CREDIT CARDS TEL: 0870 400 0688 (24hrs)

Buy on line at www.ccilive.co.uk

A

Involved in live electronic music?

The PRSF Foundation (PRSF), the UK's largest independent funder solely for new music of any genre, is running its ground-breaking 'Live Connections' funding scheme again.

Live Connections is the UK's only funding scheme specifically aimed at electronic music of any genre and targets UK-based writers of electronic/dance music. The scheme was developed to get writers out of the studio and into the public arena, to increase the public's access to new electronic music.

PRSF has successfully supported a diverse range of pioneering artists under the scheme, including Sand, Normal Position, Scanner, RUF, Jamie Hombra, Timian P Kelly, Project Dark, Stoicoff & Hopkinson and Phil Ogg, with events ranging from live sets at club nights to installations incorporating specially commissioned films and performances by string quartets.

Amount up to and including £2,000 available. Deadline for applications: Thursday 14th August 2003. For more details and to get an application form, please visit www.prsf.co.uk or call 020 7305 4044.

93 FEET EAST

COMING UP AT 93 FEET EAST

TUESDAY MAY / 27TH: MORR MUSIC

The Berlin based Indie & Electronic MORR MUSIC label brings a collection of it's latest releases to London. MS JOHN BOGA, STYROFOAM, ISAN and THOMAS MORR 7.30pm - 11pm £10 in advance from www.ticketweb.co.uk £7 on the door.

WEDNESDAY / MAY 28TH: MIDNIGHT SUN

DJ STRANGEFRUIT, ARVE HENRIKSEN (LIVE), SISSEL ENDRESEN TRIO (LIVE) AND SUPERGENT (LIVE) Conceived as a music touring festival, MIDNIGHT SUN brings together some of Norway's most creative artists. 8pm - 11pm £12, £9 (NHS, unemployed, students £6). Tickets available in advance from www.ticketweb.co.uk

THURSDAY / MAY 29th: BBCi Collective Session 3: Memphis Industries feat.

The BBC's new music and culture website presents the latest in the series of low-fi acoustic sessions from the UK's finest new talent. J. XAVIERIE, BLUE STATES, GO TEAM (DJ Set) FREE! for subscribers to www.bbc.co.uk/collective

FRIDAY / JUNE 13th: SPEAK EASY

Unlucky night... in association with 'MILK and BEEF' magazine DJ CHU-JI hosts a full fat combination of microphone poetry and lyrical outbursts, rare soul grooves and Hip-Hop. KENINSTRUMENTAL joins forces with PURRO and DAN DIEGO for a bout of hardcore three deck action. European and independent breaks and loops to mould your mood. Prohibition was never this fun. Trance Bar: 8-2AM £5

Go to www.93feeteast.co.uk for all info
93 FEET EAST - 190 BRICK LANE LONDON E1 6QN



Tenso Tempo
(Special Remix Edition)
The Album Out Now



Supporting

Acid Mother's Collective LIVE AT THE SPITZ

Thursday 5th June

Tickets £6 call Ticketweb 08700 600 100

www.racingjunior.com www.spitz.co.uk

New Album 'Tempo' Out Now in UK

The Spitz, 109 Commercial St, Old Spitalfields Market, London E1 . 020 7302 9032

Royal Festival Hall
Queen Elizabeth Hall
Purcell Room

ALPHA BLONDY SUPPORT: KINGPIN
SUN 8 JUNE RFH 7.30PM

PUBLIC ENEMY PLUS LORD ASWOD DJ
TUE 10 JUNE RFH 8PM

TORTOISE WITH GUEST MIXERS

LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY AND

MAD PROFESSOR PLUS

LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY VS COLDCUT: AUDIOVISUAL CLASH AND THE BEES

WED 11 JUNE RFH 7.30PM

SLY & ROBBIE AND MICHAEL ROSE SUPPORT: LIVE SET FROM HOWIE B
FRI 13 JUNE RFH 8PM

THE SONGS OF BOB MARLEY & LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY FEAT.

SKIN, MICHAEL ROSE, SLY & ROBBIE, NEVILLE STAPLE,

RANKING ROGER, LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY AND MANY MORE

SAT 14 JUNE RFH 8PM

DUB POETRY EXPLOSION: MUTABARUKA, JAYZIK AND MORE

SUN 15 JUNE QEH 7.45PM

TRICKY PLUS SPECIAL GUEST LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY AND MAD PROFESSOR

MON 16 JUNE RFH 7.30PM

MICHAEL FRANTI AND SPEARHEAD & SUN RA ARKESTRA & DJ SPOOKY

FRI 20 JUNE RFH 8PM

LINTON KWESI JOHNSON AND THE DENNIS BOVELL DUB BAND

SAT 21 JUNE QEH 7.45PM

FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS SUPPORT: STATESIDE HOMBRES

MON 23 JUNE RFH 7.30PM TICKETS LIMITED TO 4 PER PERSON

LOVERS' ROCK: SUSAN CADOGAN, AISHA, SISTER AUDREY

TUE 24 JUNE QEH 7.45PM

DAVID HOLMES PRESENTS THE FREE ASSOCIATION

THU 26 JUNE QEH 8PM

MACY GRAY & LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY

FRI 27 JUNE RFH 8PM TICKETS LIMITED TO 4 PER PERSON

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION & OZOMATLI

MON 30 JUNE RFH 7.30PM

Plus free screenings of Lee 'Scratch' Perry films, mixing workshops, special DJ sets, Jamaican dance events and David Katz spinning rare Lee 'Scratch' Perry tracks



Meltdown 03



PHOTOGRAPH BY DOMINIC MOLONEY

SPONSORED BY
Time Out
London

www.rfh.org.uk/meltdown

VINICIUS CANTUARIA

MON 16TH JUN QEH 7.45PM

From his work with Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil and the Brazilian 'tropical' movement, Cantuaria is one of Bossa Nova's leading lights. Tonight he continues to lead Bossa Nova into the 21st century with a selection of seductive songs and fresh, subtle arrangements.

SBC in association with CMN Tours

CMN 3D
GOODES

BOX OFFICE - 0207 960 4242 9AM - 8PM DAILY www.rfh.org.uk
TRANSACTION FEE APPLICABLE. RESTRICTIONS ON TICKET PURCHASES MAY APPLY

WIRE
MULTIMEDIA

sbc



1ère édition

FESTIVAL MIMI

24, 25, 26, 27 July 2003

Hôpital Caroline
Frioul Island < Marseilles < France

- 24/07 BENOIT DELBECQ (France), PACJAP (France/Japan)
- 25/07 PETER AND GASPAR BRÖTZMANN (Germany)
- LUC EX AND PHIL MINTON (Netherlands/UK)
- 26/07 DAVID WATSON, LEE RAMALDO, TONY BUCK
(New Zealand/USA), PIERRE-YVES MAZÉ (France)
- 27/07 Z'EV SOLO (USA)
- DJ YADIM AND THE RUSSIAN PERCUSSIONS (UK)

WIRE VIBRATIONS *l'Inrockuptible*

www.wirevibrations.com

FACE DE LA MUSIQUE ROCK TOULOUSE

Info +33 (0)4 95 04 95 50 > www.amistup.biz
A.M.I. Centre National de Développement pour les Musiques Actuelles



watermans

Sat 7 June 4-11pm
40 High Street
Brentford
TW8 0OS
info@watermans.org.uk
Box Office 020 8232 1010

Supported by Young Action Group, Spread and Watermans presents

Sonic Recycler

a night of reinvented electronics

LIVE PERFORMANCES Scenec | Tunnel

Steve Fisher Turner | Thickish DJS/Mix/MIDI

Resonance FM | Philip Tagg BBC Radio 3

Metello 12K/1st cat | BHV/Tele hip-hop/grave

Nick Lucchesi XFM PLUS short films by Henwig

Weber | Dan Seul and James Flint | Mano Radmico

Full details on www.dragonline.org.uk

the Joy of Art



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

BRUKEN CONSORT TOUR OF JAPAN 2003

03 July - kid aizack hall, tokyo
04 July - kid aizack hall, tokyo
05 July - chikko aka renga solo, osaka
06 July - yearan, yasasachi
08 July - cafe independent, kyoto
13 July - offsite, tokyo

matt davis: trumpet, electronics
rhodri davies: harp
mark wastell: amplified textures
info: tunami@age.ne.jp

II. female avantgarde festival

>> 14.6.2003

INTERNATIONAL MULTIMEDIA ACTION

the othersex

ars erotica universale

abaton

PRAHA CZ

Ra Hosnice 8 Praha 8

Spin - Sam

entrance
Ticket office: 250,- Kč + fee
250,- Kč on sale

BENEFICIAL OPERATION

watchshops, female urge, severely international, urban, libidinostock stands
fantasy happening, videostill, exhibition, installations, photos, pedologia art
groups, hereditas, industrial gallery, swing swallows corp., exorcism, osman
actinching, jewelry, curiosities in garden eden

info: carina@beneficialoperation.org www.beneficialoperation.org/multimediaaction@telia - +46 31 22 151

MUNICIPAL

HS

FANonline

Globe

UNHCR

AEGON

UNESCO

UNESCO

HULL SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN PHONIC/FINE ART Degree Show 2003

10 - 4 PM
7-13 JUNE
01482 462166
www.theljoyofart.com

21st - THE ARTS CAFÉ
M WARD
20th - BUSH HALL
DAMON & NAOMI
21st - THE UNDERWORLD
ONEIDA THE HEADS

21st - THE ARTS CAFÉ
FRANCIS MCKEE
20th - THE UNION CHAPEL
CAT POWER ENTRANCE
21st - BUSH HALL
CRANES

FRESHSPHERES.COM

5 to 16 June 2003
SAINT-ETIENNE, FRANCE



5th edition

MUSIQUES INNOVATRICES

CHVAL DE PLEIN, LA DISQUERIE, COVARIQUE, JEAN-PAB
ILENE, DOMINIQUE LENTH, AMÉRIQUE MASTRONI, HEIN
BALES, CHRIS CUTTER, TIZIO MATAINA, KAROTTÉ MASTERS
HENRY, JEANNE HERTINGER, ALAIN PELLET, CLIVE, RÉMI
HEBERT, GUY LAFON, MARC LAFON, JEAN-PIERRE LAFON,
SEBASTIEN POURBAIS, VERA FER, RÉMI, NOËL, ANDRÉ,
JEAN-FRANÇOIS PHAMME, MATHIEU VYTHONIS, JOHN RUSSEL
<http://musiques-innovatrices.org> - analise@free.fr

The First
(International)
Cambridge
Festival of Looping
June 21 2003 from 8pm

The Michaelhouse Cafe
Cambridge, England

<http://www.cambridge-loopfest.org.uk/>
Featuring Rick Walker's Loop pool,
Theo Travis, Darkroom, Cos Chapman,
Peter Gregory and Peter Olivers

£5/£4



ROSKILDE FESTIVAL

'03

26. - 29. JUNE

**BJÖRK [ISL]
BLUR [UK]
COLDPLAY [UK]
DAVE GAHAN [UK]**

**METALLICA [US]
IRON MAIDEN [UK]
MASSIVE ATTACK [UK]
QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE [US]
ZWAN [US]**

BONNIE 'PRINCE' BILLY [US]
CARLINHOS BROWN [BRA]
THE CARDIGANS [S]
DARREN EMERSON [UK]
GANG STARR [US]
BETH GIBBONS & RUSTIN MAN [UK]
THE HELLACOPTERS [S]

KAIZERS ORCHESTRA [N]
KASHMIR [DK]
SALIF KEITA [MALI]
LARS H.U.G. [DK]
LOS LOBOS [US]
MATERIAL FEAT. BILL
LASWELL & GIGI [INT]

NAS [US]
OUTLANDISH [DK]
SIGUR RÓÐ [ISL]
THE STREETS [UK]
SUICIDE [US]
TOMAHAWK [US]
TURBONEGRO [N]

10 TURNTABLES
IGHTMARE [F/FR/FIN]
ADVANCE PATROL [S]
TONY ALLEN [NIG/PAK]
ARTIFICIAL FUNK [DK]
ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION [UK]
BLACK HEART PROCESSION [US]
AIFI BOOGUM [MALU]
BONGO MAFIRN [SA]
BRENDAN NENSON [US]
CATO SALSA EXPERIENCE [N]
HEINRAN CATTANEO [ARG]
CHICANE [UK]
CHICKS ON SPEED [DUS]
CONSOLE [D]
(TOM) MIDDLETON DJ [UK]
THE DATSUNS [NZ]
THE DELGAUDOS [US]
DENMARKS FINEST [DK]
DIRTY VEGAS [UK]
DI DOLORIS & ORCHESTRA
SANTA MASSA [DRA]
DOVÉS [DK]
DZHAN & KAMEN [A]
THE EIGHTIES MATCHBOX [UK]
B-LINE DISASTER [UK]
EL-P [US]
ELECTRIC BEE-SHOCK [DAP]

ELECTRIC SIX [US]
EROL ALKAN [UK]
FC KAHLUNA [UK]
FIFTY FOOT COMBO [B]
FIGURINES [DK]
FIERNI FIERNIYN [DK]
FREDERIC GALLIANO
& THE AFRICAN DIVAS [INT]
FROST [N]
FUTSUDRUA [DAP]
GENTLEMAN & THE FAR EAST
BAND [D]
GOGOL BORZDELLO [INT]
COSMOS
GÄTE [N]
HAWKSLEY WORKMAN [CAN]
HOBBY INDUSTRIES SUMMER
CAMP [DUS]
DAVID HOLMES
PRESENT THE FREE
ASSOCIATION [TR/LUK/US]
IKSCHELTASCHEL [DK]
IMMORTAL [N]
MARCUS INTALUX & DJ LEB [UK]
INTERPOL [US]
JAGUAR WRIGHT [US]
INTERPOL [US]
JESPER PG [DK]

DANIEL JOHNSTON [US]
JUNKIE XL [NL]
KARAMELO SANTO [ARG]
KASHI KALE [US]
THE KILLS [UK/US]
KITTY WU [DK]
FILUR [DK]
KIELLVÄNDER [S]
SANDER KURKENBERG [NL]
LITTLE AXE [NL]
LOOSE CANNONS [S]
LOVE JULIE [DK]
MÄÄLEMÖ MOKTHÄR
GÄTA [N]
GÄTA (MARI)
GÄTA fröt
BILL LASWELL [MARUS]
MAD CON [N]
THE MAGIC BULLET
THEORY [DK]
MAGNIFIED EYE [DK]
MASSACRE [US]
DI MUSICAL [LNU]
METRO AREA [US]
MEW [DK]
MODER JORDS MASSIVA [S]

MOI CAPRIE [DK]
MR. LIF [US]
MURDERDOLLS [US]
THE MUTANTS [SP]
NIOKA [DK]
OJO DE BRUJO [E]
ORGANISM 12 [S]
EDDIE PALMIERI
LA PERFEITA 3 [US/PUER]
PAVAN & SUMMER [S]
KIMMO PUOHonen
KLUSTER [FIN]
THE PHONYPHONIC
SPIRE [US]
THE PSYKE PROJECT [DK]
RACING APE [DK]
RADIO 4 [US]
RADIODROM feat.
JAH Wobble
BILL LASWELL [LNU/US]
RAGING SPEEDHORN [UK]
THE RAVIONETTES [DK]
REVLOW 9 [S]
KATRINE
RING-VIBRATION [DK]
RJD2 [US]
SACK TRUCK [UK]
SAINT SUPA CREW [F]
SALVATORE [N]

SATRINIRE [S]
SGT. PITTER [N]
SILVER ROCKET [DK]
MIKAEL SIMPSON [DK]
SKS [S]
SLOVO [UK]
SOFTPIRN [DK]
SON OF LIGHT [N]
THE SOUNDS [S]
THE SOUNDTRACK
OF OUR LIVES [S]
SQUAREPUSHER [UK]
STATIC & NATILL [DK]
STONE SOUL [US]
STRING CHEESE
INCIDENT [US]
SUPER BAI BAND [MALI]
SUSPIRE [DK]
THE THIRLIS [IRL]
TIGER TUNES [DK]
TWI DELUXE [UK]
URLAUB IN POLIN [D]
UTAH [DK]
VELOUR [DK]
USE WESTSYNTHIUS [DK]
XPLODING PLASTIC [N]
YO LA TENGO [US]
YOUNGBLOOD
BRASS BAND [US]
THE YOUNGSTERS [F]

Out There

This month's selected festivals, live events, clubs and broadcasts.

Send info to *The Wire*, 2nd Floor East, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA, UK

Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011, listings@thewire.co.uk

Compiled by Phil England



Lee 'Scratch' Perry curates this year's Meltdown festival

UK festivals

AFRICA OYÉ

LIVERPOOL & MANCHESTER

Europe's largest free African music festival features artists from across the entire continent from South Africa to Senegal, DR Congo to Angola. Featured artists include Kanda Bongo Man, Pepe & Cheikh, Nossas Kyepla, Planet Elegance, Ganga Bassa Band, Aja, Sothe and more. Liverpool and Manchester various venues, 13-22 June, www.houseofconcrete.com

THE FIRST (INTERNATIONAL)

CAMBRIDGE FESTIVAL OF LOOPTING

Festive Rick Wakeman's loopt pool, Thee Travis, Darkoon, Cox Chapman, Peter Gregory and Peter Chilvers, Cambridge Michael house Cafe, 21 June, 8pm, www.cambridge-loopting.org.uk, www.collective.co.uk

CYBERSONICA

LONDON

Electronic arts festival of music, art, sound and technology featuring live performances as well as exhibitions, screenings and talks. Concerts include Burnt Friedman and Fenestr (19 June), Mitzel Aykanya, Si-jun Li and Iris Garrels all with films in the theatre plus Not Clickable and Lekot in the bar, Kid 606, DJ /raptur, The Bug and support (20 June), Whch Schneuss and Da Ceed and Modicum in the theatre and Nekra, Xala live, Asose and Dafit in the bar (21 June), Howie B and Si Beeg, Addictive TV live, plus Nick Luxxome and Play Label in the bar (22 June). London ICA, 19-21 June, www.ica.org.uk

HOT SHIT

LONDON

More future rock 'n' roll from the Sonic Mook folks in celebration of the release of their third compilation album Hot Shit. III. Part One, Chrome Head, Martin Henry Rials, Todd and DJ Oh Perfect (12 June, 7pm-midnight); Pink Grease,

Mommy & Daddy, Kings Have Long Arms, Bone Overlord plus DJs Queens of Noize (13, 7pm-12am); Ease Errata, Ex Models, Hlang, Croak Village and Ed Lake plus DJs Richard Farnies, Sean Moak McMurphy, Chandonnet and many others. London EGG, 12-14 June, 08700 600100, www.waywest.com

LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY'S MELTDOWN

LONDON

Jammin's living dub legend is the honorary curator of the year's Meltdown concert series.

Alpha Blondy and Kinguin (8 June), Pablo

Emery and DJ Land Awest (10), Tortoise mixed

by Lee 'Scratch' Perry and Mad Professor (11),

Sly & Robbie with Michael Rose plus Howie B (13), Jamaican Dance Day (14), The Songs Of

Bob Marley And Lee 'Scratch' Perry featuring

Michael Rose and Sly & Robbie with guest

vocalists Lee Perry, Skin, Neville Staple and

Ranin' Roger (14), Dub Poetry Explosion with

Muzaburku (15), Tocny with Lee 'Scratch' Perry

plus Mad Professor (16), Michael Franti and

Spearhead, Sun Ra Arkestra and DJ Spooky

(20), Union Knaves Johnson and The Dennis

Bovell Dub Band (21), Fun Lovin' Criminals and

Statik Selektah (23), Lawer's Rock evening

with Susan Cadogan, Asha and Sister Andre (24), David Holmes' Free Association (25),

Maya Grey with Lee 'Scratch' Perry (27) and

Asian Dub Foundation and Deafness (30).

London South Bank Centre, 8-30 June, 020

7000 4242, www.sbc.ac.uk/meldown

TOTAL WRITING

LONDON

Candide People's Theatre's first festival of experimental poetry, spoken word and textual performance. Music features as part of the programme: Iamboboi, Galif Brand with sound artist Philip Henderson and poet Karen Van Das Beekel with instrumentalists Peter McNamara and Michael Bleach (27 June), KMM pianist John

Tilbury in conversation with Harry Glinic, Roger Smith with poet Elizabeth James plus Sienna Farmer and Ian Garsden (28), an extended reading by Geraldine Monk, music by Giles Ni and Beastie Boys, and a closing event featuring Senton Ying and The Bohemian Brothers (29). London Camden People's Theatre, 27-29 June, 020 7916 5878, www.ept.dcoron.co.uk

International festivals

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES LOS ANGELES

USA

Simpsons creator Matt Groening curates this year's event which features Bonobos, Brodsky, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, Coldplay, The Fall, Le Tigre, Jah Wobble, The Magic Band, Mett Banana, Daniel Johnston, Shannon Wright, Tashizm, Family Side Show Players, The Coop, Wino, Yo La Tengo, The Melvins and others. Hollywood The Palace, The Henry Fonda Theatre and the Palladium, 20-22 June, \$100, www.attapalooza.com

ATERFORUM FESTIVAL

ITALY

The rich musical heritage of the Mediterranean is the focus of the 17th edition of this festival featuring Aswai Al Bohem from Tunisia (6 June), Palais Selimi from Crete (7), Keriyeh Jabbas from Palestine and Rabi Ajengill Ensemble from Turkey (8), François Alain from France (13), Lotfi Bachir from Tunisia (14) and Mausoleo di Medinet and Salihene from Algeria (15). Various venues, 8-15 June, 06 39 532 218311, www.teatromarinalettera.it/aterforum

BAD BONN KILBI

SWITZERLAND

The line-up includes Fu Manchu, Stiller Has,

Fingerpops and Pooshop (12 June), Djalek vs Feust, Vladislav Delay, Wilma, L'Entence Rouge, DJ Aguila and Denice Summer (13), Slat, Konto, Luoma, Jan Jekens, Barbara Mengler and Schneider IM (14), Düdingen Terkenn, 12-14 June, 04 41 26 493 1115, www.badbonn.ch

DRUGA GODBA (THAT OTHER MUSIC) SLOVENIA

19th annual international festival featuring The Whining Devotees of Cerebrac, Sheek Hamza Shakur & Ensemble Al-Kindi (25), Ned Rothenberg and Samir & Wissam Joubari (26), David Evans (27), Tenufoluk and Sam Mangwana (28), Kotekla and Nitroche Atlas (31), Haars El Bechar Mercedes and Garmarna (31) and Spaceways Inc featuring Ken Vandermark, Nate McBride and Hamid Drake (1 June). Ustjanje vitoria venues, 25 May-1 June, 00 386 1 430 82 60, www.drugagoda.si

DOEN FESTIVAL

THE NETHERLANDS

Weekend festival of improvised music comprising two evening concerts and a free Sunday afternoon recording session of ad hoc combinations of the various musicians. The evening concerts feature the Maatje ten Hoorn String Quartet, Janssen (Wilbert de Joode and Peter Böhlmann), Boeren bond (Cor Father, Gert Janssen, Michael Vatcher, Eric Boeren, Gert Marshall) (6 June) and Tobias Delta 405, Cor Fuhler and Keith Rowe, Wolfs World (7 June). Amsterdam Bimhuis, 6-7 June, 00 31 20 423 3740, www.doen.org

FEZ FESTIVAL OF WORLD SACRED MUSIC

MOROCCO

Featured artists include Doudou N'Diaye Rose, Fenda Mohamed Ali et l'Ensemble Maqam, Goran Bregovic, Gilberto Gil, Kangchen Dhamo Hyla Majalis, Julia Migenes, Madhav Musga, Mohamed Rezai Sharafian, Ismaïla R'Milé, Tee



Suicide on The Wire's stage at Roskilde Festival this year

Anointed Jackson Sultans and more. There is also a panels, film screenings and a photographic exhibition. For various venues, 6-14 June, www.roskilde.dk.

GNAOUA AND WORLD MUSIC FESTIVAL

MOROCCO

Annual gathering of the Gnawa brotherhood of Sufi Sufi healers and invited guests from around the world. Invites come from Cuba, Rajasthan, Tunisia, Vietnam, Norway, Algeria, France, USA, Senegal and Italy. Both a festival and a forum for the musical exchange and dialogue. Essaouira, 26-29 June, tel 212 2236 3417, www.istival-gnawia.com.

MIMI FESTIVAL

FRANCE

18th edition of this annual avant garde festival featuring Z'ev, DJ Vadim And Russian Percussion, David Watson, Lee Ranaldo, Tony Buck, Piemeyer Massa, Caspar Bratmann and others. Sponsored by The Wire. Marcellus various venues, 24-27 July, tel 03 33 04 9504 9550, www.mimifabrik.de.

MUSIQUES INNOVATRICES

FRANCE

International festival of improvised and experimental music now in its 14th year. Performers include Erik M, Hugo Davies, Chris Cutler, Tatsuzi Akayama, Jérôme Noetinger, John Russell, Jean-François Pauvros, Kaputze Musik, Rael Meekap, Niel Alschmid, Saint-Etienne various venues, 5-16 June, mimeta-free.fr

THE OTHER SEX

CZECH REPUBLIC

Feminist electronic music/multimedia festival featuring Marlene, Kira Andrieva, Fete Pudre, Babe Li-Kenchi-Aala, Kofte Mathew and Necropsic. The day also comprises an exhibition, film, stalls and workshops. Prague Abeten, 14 June, www.femalavanguardie.org

ROSKILDE FESTIVAL

DENMARK

The Wire has teamed up with Northern Europe's largest outdoor festival to take over a stage for one evening only, 27 June sees The Wire Adventures In Modern Music featuring a line-up of digital deejays from Squeezepunk, jitter electroclash from Suicide, Foothusha's psychadelic blower and wacky nippagehead from Mile Lada. New York's I-Sound will be on the decks. Other acts streaming to this annual Danish bash include Asian Dub Foundation, Beth Gibbons & Rustin Man, Björk, Bonnie Prince Billy, Chick On Speed, D-P Gang Starr, Daniel Johnston, The Kill, Massive, Massive Attack, Metallica, Mr Lif, Kimmo Pohjonen, RJD2, Radioxon, Jah Wobble & Bill Laswell, Salvatore, Sigur Rós, Toy Alley, Yo La Tengo and much more, 28-29 June, further information at www.roskidefestival.dk

SONAR

SPAIN

Bangbang annual electroclash fest is ten years old this year. The impressive line-up includes Björk, Underworld, Matthew Herbert, Big Bang, David Gruska, Hellfire, James Lideff, Jeff Mills, DJ Hall, Soft Park Truth, Prelude 73, Richie Hawtin, Trevor Jackson, Pole, Aphex Twin and label showcases from Anticon (Jef, Doseone, Sole, Sage Francis), Smalltown Supersound (Jazzkammer, Ste Dupermann, Kim Hornay, Jaga Jazzist), Meg (Tylø Nørko, Pita & Tina Frank), Cheap (Patrick Pulsinger), Tusk (Komputer, Moostamens, Pole, Apparatus), Song (Nobis, Utzhus), Telé (Kaptan Kalibos, Bjørn Torske, Uusi Fornaxia, Datarock), Musik (Akufen, Vincent Lemarie, Deadmau5) and many more. There will be a special retrospective of the festival in the form of an exhibition, as well as extensive talks, press conferences and films. Barcelona CCCB, Montjuïc and Auditori, 12-14 June, 00 34 902 150 025, www.sonar.es

Special Events

AETHER FEST

USA > WORLD

A month-long celebration of radio art featuring newly commissioned works and classics, broadcast and webcast on New Mexico's KUNM throughout the month of June. The full schedule will be posted on the station's Website, Albuquerque KUNM 89.9 FM, 001 505 234 9483, nmcqfswcp.com, www.kunm.org.

AIR GUITAR CHAMPIONSHIP

UK

Instrument presents the fourth annual championship in the art of the air guitar, London On The Rocks, 26 June, 8pm-midnight, www.ukairguitar.com

EARJOB

UK

A four-day event comprising installations and live performances by BA and MA Sonic Arts disciplines featuring circuit bending, string pulling, stack whistling, an art competition and more. London, Hoxton Gallery, 6-9 June, free, more info 020 7378 7099, earjob@btmail.com

FILE UNDER SACRED MUSIC

UK

London premiere screening of the film by Ian Forsyth and Jane Pollard – a remake of the infamous bootleg video of The Cramps performing at Napa Mental Institute. Live performances include The Parkinsons and Holly Golightly plus live music from Barred, London ICA, 13 June, Tynes London ICA EB-E7, 020 7930 3647, www.filmandsoundmusic.com

MERZ NITE MOVES UPTOWN

UK

Politics and aesthetics conference put together by Wire writer Ben Watson, followed by an evening of free improvisation. Postponed papers will be presented by Watson, Esther Leslie, Keaton

Sutherland, Su Cetron and random Zeppologists – phone 020 7388 8679 for details. There's environmental improvisation from musicians on the Cowdray Read NW1 at 4pm prior to the evening concert which includes performances from the Norwegian duo Grytstrand & Inger Zahl, sopranoists Lal Corvill and Karl Mellor, singer Maggie Nicols, hornblasters Gail Band and Ian McLachlan, THF Dredging on dictaphone, Marchester's Sonic Pleasure on bass plus assorted "bangers-in". London Theatre Technis, 2 June, Tynes evening concert, £3, 020 7387 6617, www.weserplas.co.uk

OUTLAND

Site specific community event, exploring the isle of Portland produced by Bristol based sound and vision unit Arctic. Dorset Royal Minor Theatre, 14 June, 01365 860192

THE PLASTIC PULSE: VISIONARY AMERICAN FILM

AUSTRALIA

Rare showings of key works in American underground cinema including Stan Brakhage, Michael Snow, Jack Smith, Ira Cohen, Phil Niblock, Maya Deren, Sidney Peterson, Ken Jacobs, Bruce Baillie, Marie Menken and Jackie O Motherfucker's The Angel. The evening devoted to the work of composer/film maker Phil Niblock includes a performance of His Guitar Too. For led by Orson Ambarchi, a screening of His Sun Re-tribute (in The Magic City), his structuralist films and rare interview footage (11 June). Adelaide Mercury Cinema, 28 May, 18, 19 & 25 June, 00 61 8 B410 0979, www.nao.org.au/cinematheque

RESONANCE 104.4 FM

UK > THE WORLD

London Musicians' Collective's access radio station enters its second year of broadcasting with a variety of new shows as part of a

Out There

schedule overkill? See Website for full listings. Ongoing regulars include the weekly *Clear Spot*, *The Wim's Adventures In Modern Music*, *Cultural Co-operation's London Diapason*, and *Billy Jealous' One May Single Parent Family Favourite*. Broadcasts across Central London noon-1am, seven days a week with repeats broadcast outside these times. Web streaming and full listings at www.ranxone.com.

Sonic Recycler

An afternoon and evening of live electronics and CDs programmed by the Sowden club in aid of Brentford Recycling Action Group (BRAg). Performances by Scanner, Simon Fisher Turner, Ienens and Isobelle are complemented by 10 sets from Philip Tagg (BBC Radio 3's *Müller it* producer), Steve Hall, Moton, Biffness and Nick Luscombe. The event also includes a showing of the short film *It's The Nuclear War*, a gallery environment designed by Iain Gervell, and information on the latest local recycling initiatives. London Watermans, 7 June, 4-7pm (free in the bar), 7-11pm £5/£6 (in the theatre), 020 8232 5010, www.waterners.org.uk

Sonic Arts Network Conference

Annual electroacoustic music forum for SAN members and others. Paper presentations, panel discussions and informal meetings alongside multi-speaker diffusions of the latest piece winning works. Sheftel Drama Studio, 30 May-1 June, www.sanartsnetwork.org. The event is preceded by Sound Junction II, which presents new works from University of Sheffield Sound Studies and beyond including newly composed Works For Piano, Sheftel Drama Studio, 28-29 May, 7.30pm, £3/£11/night, 0114 222 0486, www.shef.ac.uk/usa/soundjunction

On stage

ACID MOTHERS TEMPLE SOUL COLLECTIVE

Members of Tokyo's psych-rock family on tour as

Transub and Pendor plus Makoto Kawabata solo. Manchester Trieste (23 May), Leeds Adelphi (23), Newcastle Upon Tyne Cluny (26), Glasgow Nice N Sloezy (27), Belfast Arches (28), Ulster Hall Coalhouse (29), Dublin The Village (30), Cork The Lobby Bar (31), Canterbury The Rewiside (1 June), Bristol Louisiana (2), Nottingham Rescue Room (3), Birmingham Fapper & Fink (4), London Kursaalche of The Spots with Guests (5), Southampton Jesters Arms (6) and Brighton The Freeboot (8), 01922 406183, www.drunkyards.com

BORAH BERGMAN / LOL COXHILL / PAUL HESSIN

Visiting New York pianist in a trio with the legendary soprano saxophonist and soft drummer Lol Coxhill Givays Mill, 7 June, £10 in advance only, 0123 243 1569, info@kdm.com

BLACK FIRE ON WHITE FIRE

Music and mixed media performance by composer Daniel Birn which explores the mystical meaning of the Hebrew alphabet. London Blue Elephant Theatre, 3-4 June, 8pm, £7/£5, 020 7701 0100, www.gigso.co.uk

JOHN CALE

Solo tour to promote his new album, Dublin Vicar St (20 June), Wilson Keynes Stokes (21), Glasgow King Tuts (23), Birmingham Glee Club (24), Manchester University (26), Glastonbury Festival (28)

VINICIUS CANTUARIA

Brazilian Alto Lindsey collaborator and his group present their latest take on bossa nova. London Royal Elizabeth Hall (16), Leeds The Wardrobe (17), Bristol St George's (18), Belfast Crescent Arts Centre (19), Birmingham CBSO Centre (20) and Oxford St Barnabas Church (21). A CMN tour supported by The Wire, www.cmnlondon.org.uk

CAT POWER

Introspective singer-songwriter Chan Marshall and her group. Acephale, London Thu

(17 June), Glasgow Mono (18) and London The Union Chapel (20)

CHRIS CUTLER / FRED PRITHIVI

Rare improvised drums and guitar performance from this longstanding duo of ex-Henry Cow members, Oxford The Zodiac, 7 June 2003, 7.30pm, £10/£8, www.oconcerts.org

CINEMATIC ORCHESTRA

Jazzman Steve Swell and his ensemble perform a live soundtrack to Douglas Verier's 1929 silent film *Man With A Movie Camera*, Liverpool Guild (27 May), Kentish Town (28), Derby Assembly Rooms (29), Coventry Warwick Arts Centre (30), Manchester Bridgewater Hall (5 June), Brighton The Dome (6), Brighton Easter Jazz Big Band (7 August), www.nature.net

CORRA KILLER

Andante duo and CHVRCH-affiliated duo due to the London stage. Plus Dido Bo Trice and Jim Beckhaus playing a thoroughly wholesome mix of Krautrock, electronics and music from the future. Kosmische at London Buffalo Bar, 20 June 8pm-2am £5, www.kosmische.org

HUUN-HUUR-TU

A couple of dates for the Ixilan folk troupe, Salisbury Festival (3), London Queen Elizabeth Hall (14)

THE KAMKARS

Breezy, amiable rock arrangements of Kurdish and Persian music from the Iranian Kurdish family. London Queen Elizabeth Hall, 1 June, 7.30 pm, £10/£8, 020 7900 4203, www.rtrc.co.uk

LONDON IMPROVISERS ORCHESTRA

Monthly conducted improvisation session from this membership-shifting big band. London Red Rose, 1 June, 8pm, £5/£3, 020 7263 7265

MANITOBA

Leaf electronic artist Manitoba aka Toronto electronic producer Ben Smith with live group featuring two drummers plus glockenspiel, guitar, theremin and vocals. Dublin's The Jimmy Case do the warming up. London ICA, 6 June, 8pm

£9/8, 020 7930 3647, www.ica.org.uk

FRANCIS MCKEE + BRIDGET STORM + CAROLINE MARTIN

Former Vasselines frontwoman plus breeding psych-folk from Storm and the oft Country from Peet favourite Martin. London The Arts Club, 7 June, 8pm, £4, 020 7247 5681, www.rnlpresents.co.uk

NINA NASTASIA + CAROLINE MARTIN

Steve Albini-produced, Hollywood-based, alt-Country arias plus support. London Parr Hall, 18 June, 7.30pm, £11, 020 7960 4203, www.rnlpresents.co.uk

TERRY RILEY

World premier live performance of the 60s minimalist classic *A Review In Curved Air*, A two hour version for modern keyboards and other instruments by members of London's Alternative Media Project. London St Cyprian's Church, 28 June, 7.30pm, £10, 020 8881 1211, 3millionlives@btconnect.com

SCRATCH PERVERTS

Selektors and turntablists Troy Negro, Plus One and Prime. Cuts on tour. Naseemine Dame (7 June), Bristol Bowpop (14), Cambridge Queens College (17), Cambridge Corpus Christi College (20) and Gloucester (28). www.acidperverts.com

RYUICHI SAKAMOTO

Refined takes on bossa nova from the urban singer and composer, with Jacques Morelenbaum, Paola Morelenbaum, Luis Brasil and Marcelo Costa. London Union Chapel, 24-25 June, 0871 220 0260

DEREK SHIEL

A day of performances to accompany the ongoing exhibition of Shiel's sound sculptures featuring Brian Eno, Russell Scoones, Trevor Taylor and Roberto Fabbro. Oldham Colleye Oldham, 3 May-5 July (midweek), 28 June (performance), 11am & 7.30pm, 0161 911 4862

ULRICH SCHNAUSS

Young German minimal electronic artist tease the

UK Radio

National

BBC RADIO 1 97-99 FM

JOHN PEEL

Monday Tuesday 10pm midnight
The late night's bite

GILLES PETTERSON

Wednesday midnight-2am
Post Acid jazz

FABIO & GROOVERIOGER

Friday 1-3am Garage/drum'n'bass

WESTWOOD RAP SHOW

Friday 11pm-2am/Saturday 8pm midnight
Hip hop news

REGGAE DANCEHALL NITE

Saturday midnight-2am Bass culture

BBC RADIO 3 90-93 FM

LATE JUNCTION

Monday-Thursday 10.15-11pm
New Music commission

JAZZ LEGENDS

Friday 4-6pm Archive recordings

ANDY KERSHAW

Friday 10.45-11.30pm World Music

JAZZ ON 3

Friday 11.30pm-1am

Modern jazz in session and concert

WORLD ROUTES

Saturday 1-2pm

Lucy Owen presents a travelogue of global music

JAZZ FILE

Saturday 6-6.30pm

Documentary magazine

HEAR AND NOW

Saturday 10.45pm-1am

New Music magazine

MIXING IT

Sunday 10am-midnight

Hyper-edited mix of avant sounds

BBC LANCASHIRE

95.5/103.9/104.5 FM, 855 MW

ON THE WIRE

Saturday 10pm-midnight The Wire's club column.

Steve Barker mixes it up with style

BBC MERSEYSIDE

96.8 FM, 1485 MW

PMS

Sunday midnight-2am Rewheeling mix of avant sounds

BBC SCOTLAND 92.4-94.7 FM

FROM BEBOP TO HIPHOP

Wednesday 7.05-9pm Sunday 10.05pm-midnight

Jazz and more

CABLE RADIO 89.8 FM (MILTON KEYNES)

The Garden of Earthly Delights Friday 10pm-midnight. Edictive avant mix

JUICE 107.2 FM (BRIGHTON)

TOTALLY WIRED

Sunday 10pm-midnight Lethfield new music

Regional

BBC LANCASHIRE

95.5/103.9/104.5 FM, 855 MW

ON THE WIRE

Saturday 10pm-midnight The Wire's club column.

Steve Barker mixes it up with style

BBC MERSEYSIDE

96.8 FM, 1485 MW

PMS

Sunday

midnight-2am Rewheeling mix of avant sounds

BBC SCOTLAND 92.4-94.7 FM

FROM BEBOP TO HIPHOP

Wednesday 7.05-9pm Sunday 10.05pm-midnight

Jazz and more

CABLE RADIO 89.8 FM (MILTON KEYNES)

The Garden of Earthly Delights Friday 10pm-midnight. Edictive avant mix

JUICE 107.2 FM (BRIGHTON)

TOTALLY WIRED

Sunday 10pm-midnight Lethfield new music

KISS 100 FM (LONDON)

PATRICK FORGE

Sunday 10pm-midnight Eclectic jazz-not-jazz mix

FROST AND HYPE

Sunday 3-5am Jungle

4 HERO

Monday 2-4am Jazz/Jungle, cyber-soul, breakbeats

MATT JAM LAMONT

Wednesday 2-4am More breakbeat science

LONDON LIVE 94.9 FM

CHARLIE GILLETT

Saturday 8-10pm World Music, roots and R&B

RANKIN' MISS P: RIDDIMS & BLUES

Saturday 10pm-midnight Sandy roots

RESONANCE 104.4 FM (LONDON)

Radical-as-ever alternatives. Broadcasts across London midday-Tues. Live streaming at www.resonancefm.com (see Special Events)

XFM 104.9 FM (LONDON)

FLO-MOTION

Sunday 10pm-1am Leftfield electronica

Links to Net radio broadcasts can be found on

The Wire Website: www.thewire.co.uk



björk, underworld, matthew herbert big band, oxide & neutrino, the soft pink truth, schneider tm, laurent garnier, gilles peterson, trevor jackson (playgroup), david grubbs, richie hawtin, carl cox, dj krush, aphex twin, dj hell, mucho muchacho, prefuse73, pulseprogramming, jaga jazzist, bugge wesseltoft, akufen, angel molina, jamie lidell, sideral, pole, tujiko noriko...

sonar

12.13.14 June, 10th Barcelona International Festival of Advanced Music and Multimedia Art www.sonar.es



RYUICHI SAKAMOTO piano
JAQUES MORELENBAUM cello
PAULA MORELENBAUM vocals

with Luiz Brasil guitar & Marcelo Costa percussion

Sakamoto's unique take on the greats of bossa nova including Jobim, Celetino Veloso, Gilberto Gil and his own material in response.

Tuesday 24 & Wednesday 25 June
UNION CHAPEL Islington N1
0871 220 0260 / www.wardhead.com

www.serious.org.uk



london centre of
contemporary
music

LCCM is 5 minutes walk from the Tate Modern and the Festival Hall. We offer a wide range of Music and Music Production courses from part-time beginner level to full-time BTEC. As well as Pro Tools, Logic Audio and other systems for Mac, the Production courses also cover analogue recording techniques. Tuition is available for Guitar, Bass, Vocals, Piano, Keyboards, Drums, Film music and Modern composition.

With 4 floors of industry standard equipment, a creative atmosphere and a team of welcoming tutors who between them have worked with Craig David, Simply Red, Atomic Kitten, Janice Joplin and the Bee Gees, Westlife, The Crusaders, Jaco Pastorius and film director Mike Leigh, as well as writing music for television- it's the centre for making music.

Tel: +44 (0)20 7578 7458
Email: contact@lcom.org.uk
Visit: www.lcom.net.uk

the.spitz

ALL SONGS AT MPH MUSIC'S SPITZHOUSE RECORDS

June 2003

- 2 **Self + Strong**
- 4 **Night of Bad Taste featuring Cesar Orts (Subversified) + Napoli 23**
- 6 **Auditorium Collective featuring Tomasz Stanko, Paweł Maksztel Kowalski plus support their friends**
- 6 **Yet Kha**
- 11 **Charles Walker**
- 12 **Adam Green (Meldy Peached)**
- 13 **Southernmost with Skunkville Allstars**
- 14 **Paul Shand with Biggs Morrison Aristed**
- 17 **St Thomas**
- 18 **Maximum Heiter (b2b)**
- 19 **Shinein (b2b) + Dilemma**
- 21 **We Frankish Rockschool - Lesson 4 with Max Tundis, Printed Circuit, Maxi & the Ringers, Michael McHaleen**
- 22 **The Bangs Brothers**
- 23 **The Postal Service**
- 25 **Jeanne Eagelsong**
- 26 **Andy Sheppard**
- 28 **Napoli (b2b)**

STOP PRESS

Craigie Yulefest CALL FQ - DATE

Every Friday

Music, dance, food, jazz, live bands, film, arts, gigs

Every Saturday

From 1pm & until 10pm The Spitz Bar with Bangs Brothers & Ryan Flips

Sunday Clubs

10am-12pm Sunday Session 20

1 June 8pm-11.30pm + FEB

African Festa

8 June 4pm-11.30pm

bangbang

12 June 8pm-11.30pm

Spitz IV Headliners 10pm-11.30pm

Last Sunday of the month 8pm-10.30pm FREE!

Spitz + Catch

Spitz residency at Catch 22, Kingland Rd, London E3 for free-up and tickets call: The Spitz 020 7392 9032 check our website www.spitz.co.uk

See office + info 020 7392 9032

the spitz

The music, gallery, bar & bistro
109 Commercial Street,
Old Spitalfields Market, London E1
www.spitz.co.uk

The Spitz is a Bambusa Trust project
Charity No. 5000101 Company No. 199971

UK, Nottingham Moog Bar (1 June), London Regal Club, Cargob (4), Glasgow Stereo (6), Glasgow Rapp Records (7), Cambridge Sad Timing at Portland Arms with Alan Colemen (5), Bristol Cube (12), London ICA Cybucessence Festival (20), Birmingham Medicinal Bar at Costard Factory with Arvino (21) and Manchester Boombeats at Tresus Music with Arvoise (22).

SOFA TOUR

Norwegian drama and guitar duo SOFA label associates Ingar Zach and Karin Grydeland tour. The Techos are part of Menz Nissi Moves Uptown (2 June from 4pm, see special events), Roy's Jazz at Foyles (3pm & 2pm), Royal College of Art (3), Yarn, free phone 020 7388 8679, Point Club (4), Linda Terrible Club (5), Liverpool Blueprint Arts Centre (6).

SOUTH BANK GAMELAN PLAYERS

Presadyatra - a Ramayana dance-drama from Java. Full gamelan orchestra and seven dances portray the classic hindu tale. London Queen Elizabeth Hall, 3 June, 7.45pm, £6-£14, 020 7960 4203, www.royal.gov.uk

PAT THOMAS

Concert or solo piano improvisations (Oxford Brookes University Headington Hill Hall, 5 June, 7.30pm, £12, 01865 728665, www.oedipusimprovisers.com)

TRUMAN'S WATER + I'M BEING GOOD

Chicho, Seafarthen's UK rock combo on tour with Brighton "space rockers" London Underworld with Ten Grand and CANDES (3 June), Nottingham Rescue Rooms with Ten Grand (4), Manchester Tramlines with Foxes (5), Delbin Whelons with Wimbletons (6), Leeds Cardigan Arms (7), Birmingham Bar Academy with Deafheaven (8), Brighton Freeboot (9). www.bournemewater.co.uk

ART UP

Ex-Sex member and punky reggae queen makes a rare live appearance. London Garage, 19 June.

MIKE VARGAS

Structured improvisation from Stateside pianist in his debut London concert. London Movingeast, 10 June, 7.30-9.30pm, 020 7503 3101, admin@movingeast.co.uk

YAT-KHA

Tuvan rockers return with a new album, London The Spitz, 6 June, 8pm, £12/EU, 020 7392 9032, www.spitz.co.uk

Club spaces

A CERTAIN PATIO

This month's name for The Bohman Brothers' improv weekly Nigil Coesnent, Tania Chen, Steve Bressler and Alan Tonton (3), The Remote Viewers, Oliver Ray/Lee Gamble/Tom Scott/Matt Schmierer/Staphie Wilkinson (9), The Johnson Family (16), Gas Canadey/Richard Padley/Danny Knagell and Everett (23) and Johannes Bergmark, Phil Morton & A Hint of Proposis (30). London The Bonnington Centre, Monday, 8pm, £8/EU, 01932 571323

BAD TIMING

Two concerts for the left-field Cambridge's club Ulrich Schrauts' "loose set indextronica" plus DJ Damo (9 June, Cambridge Portmanteau) and Tigebeat artists Kadiso and DJ rugate, Leesa's Random Number plus Digital Nomads (24, Cambridge Boot Room). 01223 564728, www.bad-timing.co.uk

BOAT TING

Monthly improvised music and poetry night

featuring Mark Sandery/Paul Dumont, Ioli Coaliv/La Edmonds/Krist Arlemann, Barry and The Beachcombers ("futuristic punk metal noise with a cow costume") and Paul Brill. London The Yacht Club opposite Temple tube, 30 June, 7pm, £5/EU 25, 020 8670 5094, info@boatting.com

BREAKIN' BREAD

The breakdancers, funk and Hip Hop monthly celebrates its 10th birthday before taking a two month summer break. Features guest DJs Kemo 1 & The Hermit, James Frebble and 563 and guest breakdance crew Newcastle City Crew Foundation, London The Rhythm Factory, 28 June, 9pm-4am, £5 before 10.30pm, 020 7867 9477, 020 8008 0008, www.breakinbread.org

CONSUME

A night of sonic butchery featuring live action from V/V/M, Great Valley 1, Eye and Ear Control and Gaunt Tink plus Curious DJs, Glasgow CCA, 27 June, 9pm, £9/EU, 0141 332 7521, www.consume-theatre.co.uk

CUBE MICROPLEX

Music events at Bristol's alternative cinema space this month include Ulrich Schrauts and Eustis Spectrum live plus barbecue in the garden (10), Besto Cube, 0117 907 4190, www.cubemicroplex.com

FLUORESCENT

New night for esoteric beats and live performance presented by the DCR label. Apollo live, mitzvah madressa from Funktion and DJ Phil England and Timothy Evans. London Public Life, 5 June, 8pm, free, www.dcr.co.uk/fluroescent

KLUNKER

Twice-weekly improvised music and off the wall performance club: The Mind Shop (3), John Gieve, John Edwards & Dave Fowlie, Sol/Gestur (5), Roland Ramanan Quartet with Simon Field and Marisa Matus (10), Tom Chant and Hugh Metcalfe (12), Kinder Klunker (14 at 2pm), Rick Wellens' loopeleg (17), John Fry (19), Wivid, Skip (24) and Para-Mental Ensemble and The Badger Head (26), London Ssus, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9pm, £5/EU, 020 8806 8216, www.theklunker.org

LAPTOP JAMS

Brighton based collective throw down the gauntlet to all would be glitch manipulators to join the party and make their music live. Bring your own laptop 18 June, London ICA 8pm, £5/EU, 020 7930 3647, www.ica.org.uk

LEKTROLAB

Workshops in the day time (Using and Little Sound DJ software) and club events featuring French label Relax Beat, Lektrorak and Sippes in the evening. London ICA, 28 Jun 11am (Little Sound workshop), 2pm (VJ workshop), and Barn (clubnight), Prices vary, 020 7930 3647, www.lektrolab.com

NOISE BBBQ

Cobra Killer, Joan Of Arc, Sweaty, Besti, 2nd Gen, Jas & Ward, Jo Perfect, Richard Tony, Matthew Giannouli & Nola, F. London Bull, St John's Street, 22 June, 4pm, free, www.noisebbq.com

ONGAKU: ENJOY SOUND

Early evening improvisation special featuring guitarist Atsuyoshi Teran from Tokyo's Offline club solo and in trio with AMF's Keith Rowe and Eddie Prevost. The bill also features the trio of Nathaniel Gottschall, Jane Colenbran & Seymour Wright. London 291 Galery, 15 June, 5-8pm, £8/EU, 020 7613 5678, www.ongakusound.com

REBEL IMPF

Instant Music Forum featuring the Vansspeed trio of Mick Beck, Martin Archer & Foster, Pleasure-Drenching Improvisers EPN and York-based improvisation groups. York City Screen Basement, 8th, 29 May, 7.30pm, £3/£1.50, www.kakata.com

RED ALERT: FEELING THE FORCE

Hip hop, funk and house vibes with the MCs, singers and drums, Guest DJ Yusei plus regular DJ Tom Symmons, DJ Oax, Ma-Lu, Doudou Malicious & Rob New York and DJ Harley Hart, London Herbal, 6 June, 9-3am, £4/£2.50, www.ringnot.net

SPIRIT OF GRAVITY

Live experimental music evening. On Can Industries and Monstar Bobby well as aging mechanical scene correspondents from Brown Sienna, Brighton Freeboot, 24 June, 8.30pm, £3/£2, www.spiritofgravity.com

TERMITE CLUB

None-pun improvising duo Ian Grydeland and Ingar Zach with electroacoustic group Greavacious (5 June, Leeds Adelphi) and the live appearance by New Blobsoids supported by harsh electronics acts Grey Wolves/Bon-dom and Anasazi. Leeds Brudenell, 6 June, 01943 468615, www.gabz.co.uk

818

Live avant-electronics collective. London 46 Deptford Broadway SE8, 26 June, and the last Thursday of every month, 8pm-midnight, free, www.818.co.uk

Incoming

BLACK PRESIDENT THE ART AND LEGACY OF FELA ANKULAPO-KUTI USA

Exhibition exploring the impact of Fela Kuti, the Nigerian Aboboda premier and political activist. The exhibition includes many rare photographs, original album cover artwork by Granitou Lemi and a sound room featuring music that influenced and was influenced by Fela. 32 contemporary artists from the African Diaspora contribute painting, sculpture, photography, drawings, music and video including Sardou Baggs, Kendl Geers, Yinka Shonibare, Kora Walker and Naus & Sigel, Fred Wilson, Wangui wa Goro and DJ Spooky. New Museum Of Contemporary Art, 11 July-21 September, 001 212 219 1222, www.nwmuseum.org

TURNAMENT

USA

Two day celebration of the art of the turntable. Ranging from noise to HipHop, and taking it everything in between, the line up features The Hatters, Fou, Koal Heze, Boyd Rose, zink, Extended Organ, DJ Jester, DJ Faust & Shomek, Biseck & Quedius, L7K7, Zev (11 July) and John Oswald directed by Sasauna Head, Kathla Kurt, DJ Snaflock, Project DARN, Ace & Duce, Elm Beakles, Grand/Woodz/Brederoo, DJ Swimp, A Stoy & DJ Nightmare and more. David Woodard gives a presentation on Boon Gayin's Deejayin on both evenings. Callebone U.S.A. Royal Holloway, 11-12 July, £35/£18, £60/£30 weekend pass (plus limited number of student discounts available), 001 310 825 2101, www.tournament.com

Out These Items for Inclusion in the July Issue should reach us by Friday 30 May

It's the best radio station in London. The *Guardian*

An ad-free oasis of sonic experimentalism. *DAZED & CONFUSED*
A cure for conformity, still available without prescription. *Muzik*

summer 2003 season includes programmes by

ambrosia rasputin

art terry

ash hunter & paul woody

ben watson

caroline kraabel

chris cutler

cultural co-operation

earshot cinema

edwin pouncey

ergo phizmiz

50/50 sound system

gordon whitlow

joe cushley

john wyne

kash krisis

martin spinelli

mike barnes

mr thick

paul fisher

paul hood

peter blegvad

reg hall

rough trade

sharon gal

simon munney

sonic arts network

stewart lee

strange attractor

these records

the wire

your hosts:
london musicians' collective

broadcasting live across london with
simultaneous webstreaming worldwide

www.resonancefm.com

become a friend of resonance 104.4fm:
visit our website to find out how to help us continue our work



In its first year of broadcasting Resonance 104.4fm has showcased the work of over 25 000 independent artists - with over 3000 performers featured live in the studio.



From Fontella Bass to Thrubbing Ghetty, Otomo Yoshihide to Skip James, Joseph Kabasele to Shirley Collins - our playlist ranges restlessly across genres, tastes and continents.



We represent and support London's vibrant radical arts and music scenes, drawing on an unparalleled pool of informed and enthused presenters, aged sixteen to seventy.



We rely entirely on volunteers to bring you the best the city has to offer. We also rely on the substantive support and donations of our listeners to enable us to continue broadcasting.



registered charity number 290336

Directory

Label/distributor contacts for this month's issue

Labels

www.wanfangdata.com.cn

Carformes
www.carformes.com
Cynopsis
www.kernfroh.ca/cynopsis
Date
www.dateinternational.com
Del Juan
www.deljuan.com
Deis Records
www.deisrecords.net
Die Stahl
www.die-stahl.de
Dirkus
www.dirkus.com
Dress Up! Polyester
www.dress-up-on-line.de
E-Bags
www.e-bags.com
ECM
www.ecmrecords.com
EDM
www.edm.com
Edutec
www.edutec.com
Effekte
(www)effekte.de/webspace
Erenseer
www.erenseer-dc.com
Ernesto
www.ernesto-records.co.uk
EMM
www.emm.com
Emu
www.emu.com
Enja
www.enjadisco.com
Entertainment
www.entertainment.com
Entschwiel
www.entschwiel.com
Exceptional
www.exceptionalrecords.com
Extrabags
www.extrabags.at/homepage
Fancy
www.fancymusiccds.com
Fast Presents Pty Ltd
www.fastpresents.com
FHR
www.fhrrecords.com
Forc Inc
www.fozinc.com
Frontline
www.frontline.com
Groovebox
www.groovebox.com
Geostar/Micragone
www.geostar-micragone.com
Get Back
www.getbackrecords.com
Getaway
www.getawayrecords.com
Heaventech
www.heaventech.com/heaventech

Henry Bronx
www.henrybronx.com
Hrone
www.hrone.org
Hyper
www.hyperrecords.com
Indigeduck
www.indigeduck.com
International Design
www.gigelo-designs.de
Ipswich
www.ipswich.com
Jazzpatriot
www.vocespatr.ru
Korre Platiss
www.korrelplatiss.com
Lao
www.lao.com
Laura
www.lauramedia.com
Locut Sales
www.tphome.com/gloverb1000/locut/locut.htm
Logicistic
www.logicisticrecords.com
To Recordings
www.torecordings.com
UML
www.uml.tum.de
Ump
www.ump.freusseme.co.uk/home.html
Mitadore
www.mitadoreunige.com
Maximum Pressure
www.maximumpressure.co.uk
Magix
www.magix.de
Mentzreich
netzwerk.mentzreich@hetzner.net
Mercury Mania
www.mercurymania.com
Mike Phlebus
www.mikephlebus.com
M_uus
www.uus.net
Modem
www.modem.com
Mystery See
horn.planetinternet.be/~chakidic
Noise World
www.noiseworld.com
New World
www.newworldrecords.org
Noisearch
www.noisearch.com
No Sides



Distributors

KEY: T = tel F = fax

Staubgold

www.staubgold.com
+49 2121 555 6890

Tapestry

P.O. Box 659, Beleq,
CD 80421-0592,
USA

Tatoo

www.tattoocards.com
+44 1273 280000

Telex

www.telexrecords.co.uk
+44 1273 280000

Third Eye

www.threedy.net
+44 1273 280000

Thirsty Bar

www.thirstybar.com
+44 1273 280000

Titan

www.titanrecords.com
+44 1273 280000

Twink

www.twinkrecords.com
+44 1273 280000

Twisted

www.twistedtapes.com
+44 1273 280000

Uzzak

www.uzzak.com
+44 1273 280000

Upsetter/Trojan

www.trojan-records.com
+44 1273 280000

Vengeance

D Phantasm
+44 1273 280000

Veron

www.veronrecords.com
+44 1273 280000

Weekies

www.weekiesrecords.com
+44 1273 280000

Werp

www.werprecords.co.uk
+44 1273 280000

Wugo

Pestilish 3840,
D-65025 Mainz,
Germany

W.W. & W.W.

www.wwwrecords.com
World Circuit

www.worldcircuit.co.uk
+44 1273 280000

W.W.W. Pig

wewewpig@mercury.demon.co.uk
XIII Disc

www.xiii.com

BMG

Lyng Lane, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 7ST
+44 121 555 6890

Beehive

Dove House, 37 Dove Street, Manchester M1 3DW
+44 161 299 2223 F +44 161 299 3251

Catalyst

18 Kings Exchange, Tilney Road, London NW 9AH
+44 181 911 8111 F +44 181 911 8401

Cargo

17 Heathcote's Road, Parsons Green, London SW6 4JG F +44 181 3888 3888
info@cargo-records.co.uk

Chaos Records

Chandon House, Concourse Way, Colchester CO2 8HF F +44 1285 255201
chaosuk@chaos-records.com

Crush

The Crustans, Princes Hill Drive, Cumbernauld G71 3QA
+44 1299 669 079 F +44 1299 669 055

Discovery

Bentley Estate, Numbered Road, Dinton, Wiltshire SN10 3DT F +44 1860 799000
info@discoveryrecords.com

Discogs

1st Floor, 7 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1AX
+44 1245 481 005 F +44 1245 481 006
discogs.com

Dust Vendor

F +44 1299 7325 0787
EMI

Hermes Glass, Tachikawa Plat, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV34 8PR F +44 1926 416200

International Harmonies

Ritual Music, Ryman's Books, Brixton HR1 3BX
+44 1818 438151 F +44 1818 981029

Fishplay

Po Box 115, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 6YH
+44 1280 822 000 F +44 1280 822 001
fishplay@fishplay.fishplay.net

Forest Expresso

336 Linton Street, Sonoma, CA 95444, USA
F +44 171 8296 4794

Galaxy

Galaxy Music, www.galaxy-music.co.uk

Forrest Bruzzese

T 00 49 221 95 23 430
F 00 49 221 95 25 431

Gothic

Gothenburg, Sweden
www.gothicrecords.de

Greyhouse

136A Pheasant Road, London NW11 3AA
F +44 181 7923 1471

Hannover Mundt

45 Vyner St, London E2 8QD
T +44 1810 8500 950 F +44 1810 8500 9501
info@hannovermundt.com

Ideal

Ground Floor Unit 258 Vyner Street, London E2 8QD
T +44 1810 8500 950 F +44 1810 8500 3366

Imago

10 High Street, Gigginstone Ness, Isle of Lewis,
Outer Hebrides HS2 0TS T +44 1861 810 905
F +44 1861 810 909

Jan Lee

133 Victoria Lane, Peck Royal, London NW10 2NU
T +44 1810 8510 1870 F +44 1810 8505 7008

Klang

Quarry House, Marlpitchee Road, Hebden Bridge
HD4 3AA T +44 1422 842212

Koch International

Charlotte House, 97 Little Ealing Lane, London W5 4EH
F +44 1810 8532 1613

Kudos

79 Fortune Rd, London NW5 1AF T +44 1810 7462 4555
F +44 1810 7462 4561

Lowlands

Hoornstraat 5, B-2000 Antwerp, Belgium
T +32 32 23 79 00 F +32 32 23 79 01 3 236 15 27

Magnum

Turbo Bowery Building, Brink Lane, London E3 4QB
F +44 1810 5941

None Rule

Emmett House, Grey Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR5 3TU
F +44 1810 787691

Nimbus

Wyndham Lays, Moorside NPS 3SR F +44 1600 861119

Plane

Electric House, Strand, Marylebone, London WC2R 3AU
T +44 1810 379 01 F +44 1810 379 0209

Plastic Head/PHD

Units 15-16, Basill Business Estate, Ilfracombe, North Devon EX34 8PF
T +44 1274 332 3607 F +44 1274 332 3607

Propaganda

The Powerhouse, Crofton Lane, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3LU
www.propaganda.co.uk

Rebel

79 Beech Road, Tenbury Heath, Shropshire SY7 8JG
F +44 1771 3135 3135 megaphone@rebel.coop

Revolver USA

2745 18th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA
F +44 141 200 3243 revolve@revolver.com

Rockhouse

Rockhouse, 200-202 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AB
F +44 1810 8500 1500

Stylus

228 Ladislae Grove, London W10 5AH
F +44 1810 8204 0001

W.A.P.

P.O. Box 88, Abberley Lane, Abberley, Herefordshire HR4 0AP
T +44 1562 840 000 F +44 1562 840 000

World Serpent

Unit 7-9 Seager Buildings, Broadcliff Road, London SE14 6HL F +44 1810 2897
mailto:worldserpent@compuserve.co.uk

Sergasso

P.O. Box 10368, London N1 8ER info@sergasso.com
Scott Berlin

Spinefarm

1000 Supreme Metal, London E1V 0AZ
T +44 1810 850 190 F +44 1810 850 5256

Select

38A Hanmerheath Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2NN
T +44 1794 790290 F +44 1794 790216

Shrapnel

330 Collegewood Road, London NW1 4PZ
F +44 1810 8140 180 info@shrapnel.co.uk

Scorpio

Redline, 433A Aylestone, Leicester LE8 8BX
T +44 116 438 8505 F +44 116 438 8506

Sound 323

323 Ardwave Road, Highgate, London N6 5AA
T +44 020 6348 8553 F +44 020 6348 8576

Star 67

70 Lawrence Road, London N19 4BG
T +44 0802 2222 2222 www.star67.com

Star 68

74 Warren Street, London W1P 8PR
T +44 7308 3553 F +44 020 7308 3576

Stars

74-76 Warren Street, London W1P 8PR
T +44 7308 3553 F +44 020 7308 3576

Stile

74-76 Warren Street, London W1P 8PR
T +44 7308 3553 F +44 020 7308 3576

Studio

74-76 Warren Street, London W1P 8PR
T +44 7308 3553 F +44 020 7308 3576

Studio 5

50 Shore Street, London N1 9EP
T +44 1810 7261 3245 F +44 1810 7261 3271

3MV

91-93 Weston Street, London SE1 2SE T +44 1810 7295 6695

Universal

Chapelfield Dines, Kingsgate, Milton Keynes MK9 0AN
T +44 1992 60100 1500

Vital

228 Ladislae Grove, London W10 5AH
F +44 1810 8204 0001

W.A.P.

P.O. Box 88, Abberley Lane, Abberley, Herefordshire HR4 0AP
T +44 1562 840 000 F +44 1562 840 000

World Serpent

Unit 7-9 Seager Buildings, Broadcliff Road, London SE14 6HL F +44 1810 2897
mailto:worldserpent@compuserve.co.uk

W.W. & W.W.

www.wwwrecords.com
World Circuit

www.worldcircuit.co.uk
+44 1273 280000

W.W.W. Pig

wewewpig@mercury.demon.co.uk
XIII Disc

www.xiii.com

W.W. & W.W. instead, we're concerned with music we think you'll feel and understand in the same way we do.

Other activities

Ding, graphic design (in affiliation with Groove House, Los Angeles) print media, graffiti and painting

Future plans

Upcoming releases by Kosemik, Ganderius, Ahmed Sabri, Anthonius and Len Soacco and Labesque Import System

Choice cuts

Kosemik, Kosemik, Ahmed Sabri, This Book Is About Words

Info & manifolds! Jacob Dwyer

Label Lore

No: 081 Eastern Developments Music

Address

#243, 1579 Monroe Drive,
Suite F,
Alhambra, CA 91004

003 770 502 1182
info@easterndevelopments.com
www.easterndevelopments.com

Distribution

US: Heavy Records Distribution
U.K.: The Record Goods

DE: Music Music

FR: Discoworld

Run By

Scott Herren (aka Prefuse 73, Savath y Savath), Peter Ritz, Matt Booth, J.R. Dwyer and Ahmed Sabri

Roster includes

Dabrye, Hu Vrionthet, Daedelus, Kosemik, Letisian Import System, Len Soacco, Ammoniax, Ahmed Sabri and other friends

Brief History

Eastern Developments was started by a tight group of friends who shared a longheld and mutual passion for one another's expressions and ideas. Scott Herren, Peter Ritz, Peter Ochs, Caroline Choyce, Ben and Renee Loz, and Ahmed Sabri founded Eastern Developments Music in Atlanta, New York, Barcelona, Los Angeles areas

Statement of intent

Eastern Developments Music is an attempt to act as a vehicle for unheard musics/arts to provide music/design that is original, in the sense that it is in keeping with the roots of aesthetics, communication and expression, to promote affirmation for listeners to strengthen faith in the commonality of art through song. Eastern Developments is less concerned with being "for some new art", "blowing the fuck up", or "changing the face of

Subscribe

Subscribing to *The Wire* is the best way to get hold of copies of "the most essential music magazine of the contemporary era" (Forced Exposure)

It's a fact: the most exciting and influential developments in music are happening at the fringes of the culture, off the radar of most entrenched music magazines. Unlike other zines, *The Wire* is uncompromising in its mission to dig out the music that really matters, music that makes a difference. Each issue is filled with in-depth coverage of the most radical and innovative musicians (past and present) in the arenas of electronic music, avant rock, HipHop, new jazz, noise, modern composition, traditional musics and beyond. You won't find this kind of informed, eclectic mix anywhere else. Don't be without it.

Subscribe to *The Wire* and get these benefits

Save money

• **UK surface** £19.15 - subscription issue will still cost less than if you bought it from a news agent, record store or book shop

Prompt delivery

• UK delivery: paper & the magazine by direct mail.

Delivery schedule: UK: 3-5 days, Europe/USA/ROW Air: 1-3 weeks;
ROW surface: 4-12 weeks. NB: All in-subscription copies are mailed in the US

Free CDs or free extra issues

• All new subscribers receive one introductory CD or free extra issues (see opposite for details)

The Wire Tapper CDs

• All new subscribers receive future volumes in The Wire Tapper series
(see opposite page for details)

More free CDs

• After issue 12 of the Tapper series, all subscribers automatically receive copies of all CDs given away with the magazine (see opposite page for details)

Special discounts

• 10% discount on discounts on Black Issue orders (see page 109).

Wire merchandise, and mail order offers on selected CDs and music books

Subscription options

**One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 1-4**

**One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 5-7**

**One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 6-8**

**One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 7-9**

**One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
2 extra issues free**

With this option your first subscription runs for 14 issues instead of the usual 12

WI



MATTHEW
HERBERT



196 THE WIRE

WI



AUTECHRE



WI



FAUST

Steve Roden
Heiner Goebbels
Paul Daddario
Jill Neidert



WI



Alan Silva Mutambili Spring Heel Jack



196 THE WIRE

Back Issues

A fully searchable index of issues 100-203 is available at www.thewire.co.uk

The site includes downloadable articles from sold out issues.

Issues that are not listed here are sold out. Issue numbers not in bold indicate low issues remaining. For further enquiries call +44 (0)20 78422 5002 or email sales@thewine.co.uk



When ordering back issues, subscribers can get copies of the following CDs – free

To get a copy of the relevant CD when ordering these back issues, quote your subscription number on the form below. You'll find your number on the address sheet that comes with your copy of the magazine each month. If you can't find it, call +44 (0)20 7422 5022 or mail sub@thewire.co.uk. NB These CDs are only available to subscribers. For details on how to become a subscriber, turn to page 106.

TAPPER
by
SPECIAL EDITION
DOUBLE CD

The Wire Tapper 1 (available with issue 170)
 The Wire Tapper 2 (available with issue 171)
 The Wire Tapper 3 (available with issue 185)
 The Wire Tapper 4 (available with issue 186)
 The Wire Tapper 5 (available with issue 193)
 The Wire Tapper 6 (available with The Wire for availability)
 The Wire Tapper 7 (available with issue 202)
 The Wire Tapper 8 (available with issue 215)
 The Wire Tapper 9 (available with issue 225)
 Virgin sampler (available with issue 152)
Live & Direct 99 (available with issue 187)
Domino On The Wire (available with issue 189)
 Evan Parker's High Tide CD-ROM (available with issue 195)

Mata Hari's Draw Me A Riot (available with issue 206)
 Remedyology (available with issue 211)
 Exploratory Music From Pysched (available with issue 212)
 Staatsgrill (available with issue 213)
 Tangerine: And The Best Goes Off! (available with issue 220)
 Faith & Power: An ESP-Disk Sampler
 (available with issue 221)
 Klangbad: First Steps (available with issue 222)
 Flord Foces (available with issue 224)
 Club Transmediale 03 (available with issue 228)
 A Snapshot From the 2002 Domino Festival
 (available with issue 229)
 -Scope Showcase (available with issue 230)

Order form for subscriptions and/or back issues. Or order online at www.thewire.co.uk

Rates (12 issues)

UK £28 Europe €45 USA & Canada \$45 Air US\$85/£50
 Rest of the World \$60/US\$100 Surface £50/US\$66

Please enter with your subscription to start with (month).

Subscription options (see page 106 for details)

- Option 1: One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 1-4
- Option 2: One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 5-7
- Option 3: One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 8-10
- Option 4: One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 7-9
- Option 5: One year's subscription + two extra issues

WB This fee CDR will be sent separately to your first issue. Tick here if you are renewing your subscription

Order back issues here

Price per copy including postage & packing

UK £4 Europe €4 USA/Rest of the World \$4 US\$10 Surface £5/US\$6

Subscriber discount: save £1/\$1.50 per copy when you order three or more back issues

I am a subscriber My number (if known) is: /TW

Please send me issue numbers:

Please give alternatives in case these are unavailable

Your details

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode/Zip _____

COUNTRY _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

I enclose a cheque/money order made payable to THE WIRE for £_____

Please charge £_____ to my Mastercard Amex Visa/Delta Switch

Card No. _____

For credit cards please supply the longest, 16 or 19 digit, number

Expiry Date / Switch Card Issue No. Switch Card Valid From Date /

Please supply cardholder's name and address if different from above

Signature _____

Date / /

Please tick here if you would like to receive occasional mailing from compatible organisations

Return this page (or a copy) to:

The Wire, 2nd Floor East, 89-94 Wardour Street, FREEPOST LON18589, London E1 7BR, UK
 Tel +44 (0)20 7422 5022 Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011 sub@thewire.co.uk

If you are unable to remit by bank transfer, please add £1.50 surcharge. International money order or US dollar cheque. Please write your name and address on the back of your cheque

available now for free

darkroom-freefall

improvised abstract electronica

the 4th live album in the 'fallout' trilogy
featuring guest bassists Simon H. Fell
and Peter Chivers

visit www.darkroom-freefall.org
or mail info@darkroom-freefall.org
to request your copy

"a constantly changing kaleidoscopic
event" Ampersand etcetera

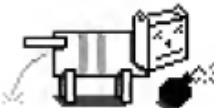


MUZE MAIL ORDER

3 Princess Parade, Derry BL9 0QH. Tel/Fax: 01244 764 3013

AC/DC HIGHVOLTS best live & greatest hits compilation with bonus CD	each £7.99
BLIND FAITH Live (2CD) Sub (pre-order) 033	£3.99
CARAVAN Caravan The Anthology / Frontiers Hollie 1878 CD	each £7.99
DEAD BOY'S DEAD BOY'S Today (2CD) 2nd press 2nd Record! 033	£9.99
DEAD BOY'S DEAD BOY'S Today (2CD) 1st press 1st Record! 033	£7.99
BRUNNIE PUPPEN Brunnies 03	£7.99
KIM FOWLEY Immortal Best Of (RARE) 2CD	£7.99
ISLAND OF MYSTERY All Wishes (remastered/unlocked) CD	£7.99
JAZZ IN SWITZERLAND Various artists 1980s compilation 033	£7.99
SHP - JAMES BROWN And LITTLE FEAT - Little Feat (2CD) 033	£7.99
NICU Orange Of Life - Jason Isaacs - Distance Live 1985 033	£3.99
MATCHING GOLF Various Artists (2CD) Best Record! 033	each £7.99
MAURICE GARRETT Various Artists 033	£7.99
MCLEODS Various Artists 033	£7.99
MCLOUD Friday Afternoons (live at the BBC '97) A 1988 CD	£7.99
LES PARISIEN CUTTING ROOMS (live and unissued) Black Art treated CD	£7.99
PARADISE 1983 Various artists 033	£7.99
PAUL McCARTNEY & Wings - Wings Over America 033	£60.00
SOFT MACHINE Various (live + - Volume Two 2 CD) 033	£7.99
SOFT MACHINE Fourth + Fifth (2CD) on 17/7/96 033	£60.00
TRIUMPH STORY The Label That Defeated Prog 033	£3.99
WORLD OF KRAUTROCK Prog Power (Wattbangers etc 202)	£9.99
WEIRD MUSICALS Various Artists 033	£7.99
ROBERT WHITFORD 1980 album + Live Morgan Roger Sherriff 033	£3.99
YOUNG LIONS 1980 album + Live Morgan Roger Sherriff 033	£7.99

UK postage 70p first + 25p each extra | EEC + 20p | ROW + 30p
Overseas customers, please add postage. Cheques/Personal Orders to MUZE



BOOMKAT.COM



Reissues / 2nd Hand
Electro-Pop
Electronic
Ambient
Garage
Noise
Punk
Metal
Ska
Reggae
Hardcore
Avantrock
Experimental

PopRock Underground

the shop
Shopfronts: B - 4711 GM Groningen - The Netherlands
e-mail: info@platenworm.nl
tel: 050310606-5181487

www.platenworm.nl

the label



Out Now: Kempes- God's Clay+4 10"

- The HellwörM - Rock Noise

the Mountaards 6.0

Green Hornet - Soulscum LP

Funky Garage Rollers

(ex-Andre Williams Backing Band)

Midheaven Mailorder

Art-rock • Hip Hop • Electronic
Orchestral Pop • Turntablism
Free Jazz • Hindustani Classical
Noise • Psychedelica • Reissues
Indie-pop • Punk • Prog-rock
Soundtracks • IDM • Break Beats
Pre, Post, and Recovery Rock

Standards for the avant garde intelligentsia
and creative souls of the world

p/s #415-241-2427 Visa / Mastercard? Miras/Hem
fax #415-241-2424 Lots of MP3s & Real Audio tracks

www.midheaven.com

a division of Revolver USA

2745 16th Street San Francisco, California 94103 USA

NOW AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE

Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind"

Cell 'The Restitution of Unseen Intelligence' 10"
Our heroes restore the conventions of form and space, restoring the electroacoustic
specters of Flemmings. 10" 8cm. Pierre Schaeffer/Krenek et al.

Whitehouse "Stream Of Dreams" 10"

This 10" restores Whitehouse's exploration of quiet sounds, both evoking psych-folk
of old and more modern extremes.

Daniel Mousé "Deluxe" 10"

10" also generated by real instruments (open guitar, soprano & soprano 9 melodic) as
played by real live Mousé. 10" of minimalist genius at its best. "An art piece."

Nurse With Wound "She and Me Fall Together In Free Death" 10"
You have ever wanted to fall? Fall like this. Now you can because Nurse With Wound has done it for you!

EKO B. "Der Lustige Hatzkicker" 8" record
8" vinyl. An edition of 25 numbered - wood 8" record objects. Each wood record is
a unique hand cut wood record object, each with original artwork.

Songs of Songs "Despite the Clock" 10"
This group of songs from music, music and culture. Featuring recordings from before the
beginning of mass media, spoken word, film, theater & Songs of Songs.

RevolverUSA Ring Records - www.revolverusa.com

prod 2120 - Periodicals, 03226 USA tel: 704-367-8163

ENTERTAINMENT: *entertain*, *host* or *hostess*, *3rd ed*
ENTERTAINMENT: REVIEW OF ENTERTAINER: *serve* or *serve up*
mop & l. ridge and loose marking play music for shopping &
single use; passing photos & precious 7 picture discs 9
info: no no no no info!!! no except: *sunlight* ed

HÆ?!?!

order these releases and stuff from
apartment, bohemic, big bald, bp,
duot, gold sound, hambone, jazzistica,
jazzland, jester, kifte, kramt,
kyklo drome, nor wan, origo sound,
perfect pop, recting jingle, rump
granophone, sale as silk, scallophen
supersound, solo, stickmen, tefla,
thatsuperfectwonderball,
plus many others from
www.purpleheartrecords.co.uk
www.mercurerecords.co.uk

www.sweettheaterrecords.com

Squealer Music
www.SquealerMusic.com

Acid Mothers Temple
New Geocentric World CD and double LP
In C CD

Major Stars

Gold Sparkle Band

Last Days of May

Circle

Distributed by Surefire
www.SurefireDistribution.com

steve roden ~ brandon labelle ~
voicecrack + cz ~ janos khan ~
oren ambarchi + gunther müller +
+ philip samartzis ~ toshya tsunoda ~ e'n ~
janek schaeffer ~ arg ~ [des]integração ~
carlos zingaro ~ sul ~ pimmon ~
marc behrenz ~ karkowski + antimatter ~
rené berthelon ~ utero

www.sirr-records.com

SATORU WONO

200



SONATA

RELEASE DATE: 2003-06-23
DISTRIBUTED BY EDGECO EXPORT INC.

SONOKEE FISHING CO. email@sonokee.com



out now.
www.intervision.com

www.neptunerecords.com



A solid white circle is centered on a black rectangular background. Below the circle, the website address "www.forcedexposure.com" is written in a white, sans-serif font.

Unusual &
Experimental
Musics

New & Used
CDs, Books, Magazines
at Mailorder Prices...

www.squidco.com

Ambiances Magnetiques Y ReR Y Cuneiform
Dorgen Y Thirsty Ear Y Quakebasket Y Chadula
Frith Y Erstwhile Y FMP Y Jon Rose Y Victo
James Eu X Pj X Incubus X Tzadik X Intakt



Epiphanies



Bad rock: Tim Buckley

You don't have to wade 12 volumes of Sigmund Freud to express how the dead hand of one generation seizes on the next. In Scotland, all it takes is one rusty little shiv of a phrase. It says that no matter what you do in life and no matter how rich and fatigued, they're never going to be better than where you came from. Whenever some local son makes it to the papers or comes home with a big car and a trophy wife, they shake their heads and say: "Him? I kent his father..."

As the son of a well-known father myself, you'll understand that I was viscerally and unshakably swum never to use such a drably oedipal slight. Biology and heredity, down You are what you make yourself. Things change, though, and biology is patient for revenge. Suddenly, one morning, it turns out they were eight after all. It's your father in the shaving mirror. They knew him and they know you as well. Even so, I had vowed never to utter those words.

You'll forgive the confessional digression, but the second Mrs Morton was a lady called Sally Smirnoff. I loved her dearly and she brought me out of myself. She was with me one night at the Forum in North London, tucked away snug in an inside pocket. The young guy onstage was already the darling of the music press and there was, as they say, a lot of love in the house that night. The voice was big and theatrical, the way Robert Plant might have sounded if Bob had grown up in some Irish enclave in the Midwest. The songs teetered on the edge of overripe. I was getting that way myself and halfway through the set, with Sally's fulsome encouragement, I took it on myself to tell my neighbour, "I saw his father, you know. He was amazing."

Jeff Buckley's bizarre death in the early summer of 1997, by drowning in the Mississippi, propelled him to instant legend. It also looked as though the Waters of Cronos had claimed him. 22 years earlier his birth father had died younger still, having mistaken heroin for coke. (An easy kind of mistake. I used to mix up vodka and a refreshing glass of water.) The irony didn't go unnoticed. Since everyone knew that Tim Buckley had played no part whatsoever in raising his son,

some grim principle of heredity seemed to be at work.

We went through the same kind of thing trying to hear echoes of Dewey Redman's eldritch saxophone wail in his boy's work, even though knowing that young Joshua never lay in his cradle listening to the old man practise scales next door in the same way, there ought to have been no audible connection between the Buckley men and much of the commentary tried to point up the difference between Jeff's tritely, almost operatic style and Tim's skittering, multi-scale improvisations.

Even before I saw him in London and Paris towards the end of his life, I'd always thought of Tim Buckley as primarily a jazz musician, in fact only notionally and accidentally a singer at all. Almost the first image I saw of him was a street photograph of Tim on a snowy sidewalk, hands dug deep into a pea-jacket, pipeleaner legs twisting against the cold. On the wall behind him, a poster advertising successive gigs by the John Coltrane quartet and an Ornette Coleman group that night, now that I think of it, have featured Dewey Redman.

That kind of lineage didn't square with the Tim Buckley who'd come through in the business on the say-so of the Mothers' manager Herb Cohen, singing a brand of psychedelia folk. That was the Buckley who made his UK debut in 1968, accompanied by guitarist Lee Underwood, vibist David Friedman and the hastily recruited Danny Thompson on bass. That was the gig preserved on *Dream Letter: Live in London*, still the most elegantly misstated bootleg ever. On it, Buckley is still unmistakably a folkie, but Underwood's subtle chords, Danny's sinuous lines, and his own chiming 12-string, point the music in a very different direction.

Two years later, stuff like "Buzzin' Fly" and "Hi Li Hi Lo", in fact the whole idea of songs with words, had been set aside in favour of a spooky experimentalism. In his lifetime, Buckley didn't threaten the charts at all. The second album, *Happy Sad* (1969), clambered onto the bottom rungs of the Top 200. Three years later, even devoted fans were scratching their heads at Local's bizarre vocalise. The industry saw it as flagrant and ultimately suicidal uncommercialism. Others cited Norman Mailer's portentous ambition to

Having witnessed live performances by both Tim and Jeff Buckley, Brian Morton wonders whether the songs of the father will always be visited on the son

"capture the Prince of Truth in the act of changing a style". Later, others still pointed to the supposed example of Miles Davis, missing the point twice over: Miles's ambitions were hardly uncommercial and anyone with ears could surely hear that he didn't change half as much as he like us to think.

Right from the start, Buckley was an improviser. On that extraordinary London set he yodels furiously between songs, running variations that couldn't be fitted into a format that was already far too constraining for him. When I saw him five years later, the parallel with Coltrane made more sense than ever, except that Tim Buckley physically couldn't take the horn out of his mouth. He'd long since turned himself into an instrument of troubled grace. I saw him twice in a period of days. I think this was the trip when he recorded Fred Neil's "Dolphins" on a session for BBC TV's *The Old Grey Whistle Test*. It's still the only Buckley performance most people know. By that time, the voice had lost some of its purity at the top end but was still too young and too unlearned by excess to have acquired much gravel and gravitas at the bottom. He was still doing his most intriguing stuff between the songs, tuning and retuning that amazing voice, figuring on ideas so fleeting and evanescent that they didn't seem to be part of any identifiable "material" but moments in an ongoing process of self-discovery. The MCS apparently based their follow-up sound on John Coltrane's quartet; I suspect Tim posed himself in front of that poster in deliberate homage. Like Trane he was hearing different harmonies, and like Ornette he had a profound belief in his own unschooled philosophy.

The rock business is understandably nervous of improvisors. Even with the impetus generated by 1994's *Grace*, Jeff Buckley would never have been allowed to free-associate and improvise the way his father did for pretty much the last five years of his career. Even though Jeff's body of work was tragically foreshortened, I remember pretty much all the songs he did that night twenty-something years later. I just don't remember much music between them. That was and is the difference. □

Subscriber specials

When you subscribe to *The Wire*, you don't just get a year's supply of "the most essential music magazine of the contemporary era" (thank you, Forced Exposure). If you had been a subscriber over the last 12 issues, you would have also received exclusive, free copies of these CDs...



Tigerbeat: And The Beat Goes On!
Given away to subscribers with issue 220



Faith & Power: An ESP-Disk Sampler
Given away to subscribers with issue 221



Klangbad: First Steps
Given away to subscribers with issue 222



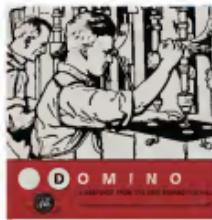
Jord Focus: A Norwegian Sampler
Given away to subscribers with issue 224



The Wire Tapper CD
Given away to subscribers with issue 225



Club Transmoderate 03
Given away to subscribers with issue 226



A Snapshot From the 2003 Dourado Festival
Given away to subscribers with issue 229



~Scope Showcase
Given away to subscribers with issue 230



UNDER-CURRENTS

THE HIDDEN
WIRING OF
MODERN
MUSIC



In addition, you would have qualified for special discounts on *The Wire's* 20th anniversary projects, *The Wire 20 1982-2002 Audio Issue* (Mute triple CD box set) and *Undercurrents: The Hidden Wiring Of Modern Music* (Continuum paperback).

For details of how to subscribe to *The Wire*, turn to page 106 or go to www.thewire.co.uk.

For details of how to get hold of discounted copies of *The Wire 20 1982-2002 Audio Issue* and *Undercurrents: The Hidden Wiring Of Modern Music* go to www.thewire.co.uk

NB All the CDs listed above are still available to new subscribers with Back Issue orders (see page 99)

6/05

BRUNNEN
Verlag für
Kultur und
Politik
www.brunnen.de

ÜBER ALLES

